MATABELE THOMPSON

HIS AUTOBIOGRAPHY
AND STORY OF RHODESIA

EDITED BY HIS DAUGHTER

NANCY ROUILLARD

2/6

REVISED EDITION

A DASSIE

BOOK

2/6

FRANCIS ROBERT THOMPSON was one of the three white men who were commissioned by Rhodes in 1888 to make their way to Bulawayo to obtain from Lobengula the mining concession which was to become the basis for the incorporation of the British South Africa Co. It must be ascribed mainly to Thompson's courage and knowledge of Native ways that it was granted, for during much of the period of negotiation he was without the support of his colleagues, who had returned south.

This achievement is the chief subject of his autobiography, which as he did not live to complete it himself, has been prepared for publication by his daughter. The account given of it is rich in dramatic episodes and in characterization black and white, that would be the envy of any writer of fictitious adventure; but there is much else in the book. In it we have the story of a man who, having been given the best education available by English parents who understood the advantage of it, won his way to honourable fortune in the rough and tumble of a dominion in the making.

But perhaps the most valuable contribution to the history of our time is his untendentious and convincing portrait of the great man with whom he had so much to do—the Rhodes who 'never recovered from the shock of the Raid, the ruin of his plans, and the mortal blow to his vanity'.

Extract from *The Times — London.*

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PREFACE

THE political origin of Southern Rhodesia lies in the Concession granted in 1888 by Lobengula, King of the Matebili, to a syndicate consisting of Cecil Rhodes, Charles Dunell Rudd and Francis Robert Thompson. The reasons why this Concession was sought by Cecil Rhodes, the means by which he obtained it, and the men upon whom he relied for success are described in this book, which is Thompson's account of the whole matter. It might never have been written had the Rhodesian history published in Thompson's later years—he died in May 1927—not revealed that there was nobody but himself to write it, for on many facts concerning the Concession he was the only authority.

As there was much else in Thompson's career besides his negotiations with Lobengula, he decided to begin his memoirs with the origin of his family in South Africa, both for the intrinsic interest, and because his early life revealed the background against which Rhodes and Rudd saw him when they chose him for the crucial mission to Matebililand. He had been Rhodes's intimate adviser in Bechuanaland in 1884, and later devised the compound system for native labour at Kimberley. Of Rhodes he was able to write with the intimate knowledge Rudd and Beit possessed but never published, and he could offer important testimony on the Jameson Raid.

When my father died he had completed some chapters, drafted the others and decided the form the book should take, but when I came to the task of completing the book for publication I found I had to piece together much from his notes and memoranda. In doing so I included nothing that I had not heard him say, and verified all important statements by reference to my brothers, Senator F. C. Thompson and Mr. E. Cresswell Thompson, to my mother, and to my brother-in-law, the late Dr. J. A. Mitchell. To all of them I acknowledge my deep indebtedness for invaluable assistance.

I have to thank the Rhodes Trustees, the Executors of the late Dr. Rutherfoord Harris, and Mr. Percy Rudd, for kindly allowing me to print many hitherto unpublished letters and papers.

NANCY ROUILLARD

Note for the Dassie edition

Since the publications of the first edition by Faber and Faber of London in 1936 I have found further letters and notes written by my father. These have thrown a clearer light upon events in Matebililand. I have taken the opportunity which this edition in the Dassie series affords me of making additions to the appendix and recasting certain pages in the chapter entitled 'A Killing by Night'.

I wish to thank Mr. Hiller of the Central African Archives for his kind permission to quote extracts from letters by the Rev. John Moffat and Mr. Dennis Doyle. The originals of all letters which are incorporated in this book from Cecil Rhodes and C. D. Rudd and Rutherfoord Harris are in my possession.

NANCY ROUILLARD

Note upon the spelling 'Matebili'

Throughout the book I have used the spelling 'Matebili', upon which my father always insisted. In the title, however, I have yielded to the persuasion of my publishers, and have employed the more familiar spelling 'Matabele'.

N.R.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I	A HUNTING EXPEDITION IN 1850	7
II	A FIGHT AT CORNFORTH HILL	17
III	WITH RHODES IN BECHUANALAND	29
IV	THE COMPOUND SYSTEM AT DE BEERS	42
V	GREETING TO LOBENGULA	47
VI	THE MATEBILI AND THEIR WAYS	56
VII	INDABA AT BULAWAYO	65
VIII	THE SACRED FOUNTAIN	72
IX	'RUNNYMEDE'	87
X	A KILLING BY NIGHT	94
XI	CECIL RHODES	105
XII	'SUNSET AND EVENING STAR'	120

APPENDICES

A	FRANCIS THOMPSON'S DIARY IN 1853	127
B	CHIEF GALISHWE	135
C	THE STELLALAND AGREEMENT OF 8 SEPT. 1884	136
D	RUDD'S DIARY AT BULAWAYO	138
E	THE MATEBILILAND CONCESSION	140
F	THOMPSON'S DIARY AT BULAWAYO	141
G	RUTHERFOORD HARRIS'S LETTERS TO THOMPSON	150
H	EXTRACT OF LETTERS FROM THE REV. JOHN MOFFAT	156
I	EXTRACT OF LETTERS FROM DENNIS DOYLE	156
J	APPOINTMENT AS BISHOP'S COMMISSARY	156
	INDEX	157

Chapter I

A HUNTING EXPEDITION IN 1850

MANY people have asked me to write the story of my life, and to relate exactly how the Matebililand Concession of 1888 was obtained. With Charless Dunell Rudd and Rochfort Maguire I was intimately concerned in that transaction, and as time passes it becomes clearer that unless I write the story much of the detail of those days will be lost.

In relating this history I am concerned only in telling a plain tale. Many of those of whom I shall write are dead, but I shall write of all with justice, of many with warm affection, and if in any instance my verdict sounds harsh it will be only because I am bent on telling the truth as I see it.

My story will necessarily include much of Cecil Rhodes, and not because I wish to throw any fresh light on a subject already well studied, but because it was impossible to have lived in close contact with so remarkable a man without my life to some extent being coloured by his. Our points of view often differed, but on the whole I think that no man knew or loved him better than I did, and there could have been very few to whom he spoke more openly. That there were two sides to Rhodes's character is undoubtedly true, but never was he actuated by mean or petty motives. As a young and ardent patriot he fired my imagination when we were merely lads together. He told me in those days that he had but one ambition—to paint the map red from the Cape to Egypt and to federate the world under the aegis of the British Empire. This was the Rhodes of the wide vision, the humane temper and the unselfish ambition. He could and did respect the Boer for being a Boer, and the British for being British. That was the Rhodes I knew and honoured right up to the untimely end of a great life. The other Rhodes, with an entourage of fawning sycophants, did not appeal to me, and I do not think to him either. At any rate, I am telling the truth as I see it.

I think Rhodes sought me out because of my knowledge of the natives, and of things South African generally. I had acquired this knowledge not through special merit, but rather through force of circumstance. I was born and brought up in pioneer surroundings, with a love of exploration and hunting as a heritage.

My father was the third son of Francis Thompson, of Cornforth Hill, Richmond, Yorkshire. He sprang from a line of English squires who had lived on their own land for six centuries. There were members of the family who had served their country as soldiers and sailors, but I must confess that the only remarkable distinction achieved through the years was that of being the best horsemen in their county. The county, possibly, considered this attainment as one of the most desirable. There was a pun on the name, and they were known far and wide as the Riding Thompsons. At the time my father came to South Africa his eldest brother, afterwards Colonel Robert Thompson, was in India, where he served with distinction in the Indian Mutiny; but the other brothers simply carried on their tradition of peaceful and unenterprising citizenship and sought no farther afield.

At my grandfather's death the patrimony was divided among the children and my father's portion came to £7000. In those days this was a not inconsiderable sum and with it came the opportunity to satisfy one of his ambitions, which was to go into the wilds and make his name as a hunter of big game. South Africa was the most obvious place for such an enterprise. It was a country of adventure and vast opportunity, and although his intention was to spend only a few years on the project, yet it was undoubtedly more pleasant to go somewhere where he could take his young wife with him. She was just as keen as he was, and in fact I have often wondered whether it was not due more to her influence than to any other that he decided upon this momentous step.

My mother was so forceful and unusual a character that I may be pardoned if I dwell upon one whom I had good reason to regard as a wonderful woman. She was a member of the Cumberland family of Backhouse, well-known bankers of their time. They claimed that the blood of Robert the Bruce ran in their veins, but they were nevertheless entirely English. Besides banking, the family had strong leanings towards the Church, and there was a large sprinkling of clergy among my mother's relatives, but she had also a strong Quaker strain. These inherited traits of religion and shrewdness persisted right through her life, and gave her the anchor which kept her firm through many South African days of bitterness and loneliness. Her first marriage was a runaway match to Gretna Green, when she was little more than a schoolgirl. Her parents had opposed the marriage, although the young man had position in the county, but being close to the Border she took the law into her own hands, in the good old-fashioned way, and the

families had to accept the inevitable. Her happiness was shortlived, for her husband died within a year, and the widow returned to her own people.

She had considerable beauty and talent, and had received what was regarded in those days as an advanced education for a woman, but it was her pluck, vitality and gay humour which so perfectly suited my father and led him first to aspire to her hand and then to take her on his great venture into the unknown. In June 1850 they were married and almost immediately set sail for South Africa. They landed at Port Natal, which was then considered the nearest point of departure for the interior. They decided that Pietermaritzburg would be a suitable place for my mother to make her home while my father took his first trip into the wilds. There must have been little to attract her in the few rows of wretched houses that people called Pietermaritzburg in those days, but it was a comparatively safe place, having been settled ten years previously by the Voortrekkers from Cape Colony under Pieter Retief and Maritz. The days of Dingaan and the massacre of Weenen were then too recent to permit my father's choosing a place farther up-country, but Pietermaritzburg seemed wild and lonely enough to the rather gay and fashionable young Englishwoman. It was her own choice, however, and she did not dream of grumbling.

A part of my father's diary on his first trip into the interior has been preserved and is of some historical interest, but it recounts one of his least noteworthy journeys. I have reproduced most of it in an appendix to this volume.[1] It reveals a great deal of the man—his optimism, his generous appreciation of kindness, and his wholehearted interest in what was to him a glorious adventure.

My father came thus early into contact with the best type of British and foreign missionary. On this first trip he met and appreciated Dr. and Mrs. Moffat, and on a later journey he penetrated as far as the Zambesi, and there met Dr. Moffat's son-in-law, David Livingstone. I think it is very probable that their outlook on the native question, and their interest in the problems even then facing this country of mixed race and colour, influenced my father's opinions. Certainly it was this outlook that he passed on to me, and although I came to know more of natives than he ever knew, and my first ideas were sharply modified, the missionaries and I never wholly parted company.

[1] Appendix A.

My father soon discovered that hunting, combined with trading by barter, could be very profitable. He was able to pay expenses, and even on occasion to come out well on the right side. He managed to keep most of the £7000 intact in my mother's hands, and he began to form the idea that they might one day decide to buy land, settle down and make South Africa their home. My mother's first child was born in Maritzburg, and as others arrived it became increasingly necessary to decide upon some settled plan. I have no doubt that my mother began to think that the shooting and exploration had gone on long enough. Be that as it may, an event that entirely changed the family fortunes occurred at this time. During my father's absence it came to her ears, chiefly through my father's elder brother who had come out later to Natal, that there was easy money to be made in a speculation. Like all speculations it was represented as something perfectly safe, and my mother allowed herself to be persuaded. The idea was that most of her capital should be spent upon the salvage of a wreck in the harbour at Port Natal. This was said to be worth a considerable sum, and her fortune should easily be doubled. The deal was put through, but before the work began a storm sent the wreck and my mother's money into the Indian Ocean, beyond the reach of salvage. It was a pretty bad tale to have to tell the returning traveller, as it changed the whole aspect of his African plans. Something was saved from the debacle, but certainly not enough to provide for a growing family. My father might have returned to England, but that seemed to him a cowardly decision when there was a possibility of making good in South Africa. Trading, of which he had gained some experience, offered a solution; and to his great credit he buckled down to the uncongenial routine of a partnership in a shipping and trading concern at Port Elizabeth. It must have been hard for my mother, thus cut adrift from her own environment. Home and England had vanished into the limbo of the past. She must have adjusted herself quickly, however, for I can never remember her otherwise than cheerful and happy. On the courage of such women the nation of South Africa has been built.

It was when the ship in which my parents were travelling from Port Natal was just outside the harbour at Port Elizabeth, in 1957, that I was born. My birth is accordingly registered at Marylebone, England, as one born on the High Seas in an English ship.

Port Elizabeth in those days had already become an important commercial centre. It had been the landing place of the 1820

settlers, and both there and at Grahamstown, ninety miles away, the English culture had taken root. There was a comparatively large and flourishing British community, and by the time that I became conscious of such things I found that my father and mother had already established a niche in the society of the little town and had many friends. I grew up with boys of whom some became famous in the history of South Africa. I can remember being popped over a garden wall one afternoon by a boy who became a Justice of the Supreme Court. I was the youngest and most agile of the gang, and it was required that I should steal a fowl from the neighbour's yard and hand it over to my friends. It was needed for a stag picnic the next day, and the fact that the owner of the bird was to be a guest only made the adventure more exciting. Besides the companionship of my boy friends, and the many devious escapades which are part of any healty boy's existence, I found special pleasure in wandering about and watching the growth of the town. Building and other development was going forward, and I soon became a friend of the artisans. I think I must have been more than usually alert in acquiring general information of all kinds, as I certainly gained a store of practical knowledge that was to be of the utmost value to me in later years. I always found making friends with people of all classes an easy thing. I inherited a gift of languages from my mother, and thus quite naturally became proficient in Dutch, and in the various native languages that I came across.

Had it not been for my mother's influence I have no doubt that I should have become a very rough small diamond indeed, but she was adamant in morals, manners and the necessity of education. Just because the dangers of contamination in a new country of mixed population were ever present, she and many like her were much stricter than would have been necessary in a more settled community. Her teaching was an adequate creed—that no matter where we found ourselves, no matter how the circumstances of our lives might vary, no matter with people of what class or colour we had to deal, the aim must be to fear God, honour the Queen, respect ourselves and play straight.

My mother contrived to send my eldest brother to school in England. This was an achievement, but one member of each generation of Thompsons was allowed to send a son to the Blue Coat School in London, and my eldest brother Backhouse accordingly went. It seemed incredible to my mother that her other sons might not be able somehow to receive their education in England, but it was gradually borne in upon her that finances would not

allow it. There were good schools even then in South Africa, however, and I was sent to Grey, the school founded at Port Elizabeth by Sir George Grey, which was and is still as good as any in the country. My father and mother taught me to love reading and music, but I was little more than thirteen when another change came over the family fortunes. In 1870 it was decided that my father should move to the newly discovered diamond fields, and we were to live at Klipdrift, now Barkly West, in Griqualand West.

I was delighted at the prospect of a change and the possibilities of adventure, but I realized, and my mother knew too, that my education would probably suffer. I promised her that I would do all I could to continue my studies, and I did manage somehow to find time to carry them on in the midst of what became almost immediately an adventurous existence. So successfully did I accomplish this that when I was able, many years later, to enter Oxford, I passed the entrance examination with little effort.

Only a year or so before leaving Port Elizabeth I earned my first contribution to the family exchequer. I had discovered in my talks with builders that copper nails were hard to get in the country, that the supply had run short, and that Europe and the nail makers were very far away. A small boat was the beloved possession of myself and some of my boy friends. One calm day I commandeered the boat and rowed out to one of the wrecks that lay not far from the shore at Port Elizabeth. With a small chisel I prized out the copper-headed nails from the hull, and filled a little bucket. I then made my way back to town and sold them. I think I was aged ten, and I remember that the sum I realized gave me more joy than any money I ever earned afterwards.

When it was decided that my father should move up to the diamond fields I was wild with excitement to join him. The family, at first, was to remain at Port Elizabeth, but when it became certain that they would shortly follow him I was allowed to go ahead of the others. It can hardly be realized nowadays what vast opportunities for adventure, what enormous possibilities, this first diamond rush meant to a youngster such as I was. It was, moreover, the stepping-stone to the great hinterland. I knew of the road my father had first taken, and his tales of the great interior had fired me with enthusiasm to follow the same road and even farther.

Thus it was that in 1870, in the company of some nine or ten men of various grades of society, I waved farewell to my mother and went over the hill down the long road that led over great

mountains and across wide plains to the Vaal River. I was to be allowed thus early to try my luck as a digger. I was gifted, I suppose, with plenty of pluck, certainly marvellous health, and luckily an intuitive knowledge of how to get on with my fellow men, Boer, Briton and native. Above all I had unbounded ambition and enthusiasm. I loved my fellow men; and to this day, as an old man, I can still say that I love them, and have on the whole encountered far more goodness and honesty than the reverse. If I early learnt that a quick eye and a ready fist were valuable aids to knowing my fellow men, I can only say that in those days physical fitness counted for a great deal, and a straight punch and a cheerful smile took one a long way. I was a powerfully built lad, and a little later I easily took my place amongst the athletes of the community. I held the Champion Belt for sprinters on the Diamond Fields, losing it to Ling, the father of the present famous athlete of Kimberley. Many years afterwards I 'put the weight' for my college at Oxford against Cambridge.

Life on the diggings was hard work for a boy. I hired a native for ten shillings a month and his food, and together we toiled from sunrise to sunset. My food was mealie meal and a little tea and coffee. Meat was rare. The life had its compensations, for in each bucket of gravel I hoped that I might come upon a diamond. Most of those round me had some luck, but nothing came my way. At length the day arrived when food and money were almost exhausted and I nearly gave up in despair. Then, to my delight, my trusted native brought me a beautiful stone. This was on a Thursday. I dissembled my excitement and worked until the Saturday, when I went into Klipdrift to sell my treasure. I realized £40, and with a great sense of importance I laid in a further stock of provisions and returned to my camp with £25. I put the money carefully into my little box, determined that this should constitute my capital for eventualities. I toiled on for another month, but with no luck of any kind. Then one day, feeling heartsore and despondent, I returned to my tent and found that my box had been broken open and my money stolen. I was only a lad and the blow seemed almost overwhelming. I had nothing left, and food on credit, especially for a lad of my age, was not to be had. I decided to give up this dream of wealth before I got into debt, and try something else.

My father and mother were then settled at Klipdrift and wished me to return home, but again I begged leave to try my fortunes elsewhere and I was lucky to obtain a position in a general mercantile business. I have never regretted the useful knowledge

I gained there, but the life hardly suited me, and so I was overjoyed when I was able to accompany an old friend of my father on a trip into the interior.

My father by this time was firmly established at Klipdrift and becoming a moderately successful man. His political aspirations kept him interested in the country's problems and it was gradually borne in upon him that there might be a great future for a youth who applied himself to gaining an intimate knowledge of native affairs. He accordingly suggested that I should do this, beginning with native languages and customs. The object was after my own heart, and so diligently did I follow his advice that in a very short time, young as I was, I became something of an authority on native matters. This knowledge was easily acquired on the series of journeys I took into the wilds. I was able by barter to do well financially, and I went farther and farther afield, searching for the knowledge I wanted, and putting through profitable transactions with the tribes I came across.

When still a lad I found myself on the Limpopo or Crocodile River at the foot of the Zoutpansberg. I roamed about in what is now known as Bechuanaland. I shot big game, which I bartered with the natives for ivory and feathers; and once when I was on my homeward journey from the Lydenburg Goldfields in the Northern Transvaal I bartered my ivory and feathers with a trader taking in exchange two tons of tobacco. This I sold at a great profit on the Kimberley market. This venture was, indeed, the nucleus of the sum which later went to stock my farm.

Early in 1873 my father's political ambitions began to be realized, for in 1872 it had been decided that Griqualand West should be administered by a Legislative Council of eight. Four members were to be appointed by the Governor of Cape Colony, Sir Henry Barkly, acting for the Imperial Government, and the others were to be elected by the people. Right up against the borders of the uncivilized and little explored interior, Griqualand West was country that had belonged from time immemorial to the great Bechuana tribe. A wandering tribe of natives, known as the Griquas, had been settled on this land by the British Government, and had been reinforced by a band of coloured nomads under Adam Kok. It was inevitable that disputes should arise over questions of land, both among the natives themselves and with the Boer settlers, apart from the fact that the borders of this country had never been clearly defined. It was accordingly thought best to remove some of the tribe to another part of the country, on the Natal border, and this was known in turn as

Griqualand East. When diamonds were discovered in Griqualand West, however, it was another story—disputes could not be settled by asking the white men to go elsewhere. The border had to be clearly defined, and the country administered in a serious manner. Mr. Richard Southey (afterwards Sir Richard), a veteran of the Kaffir Wars in the Eastern Cape who had done yeoman service in the Cape Government, was appointed Lieutenant-Governor of Griqualand West and President of the Council. It was to this Council that my father was elected.[1]

In the intervals of my journeyings my headquarters were with my parents at Klipdrift. I well remember the afternoon I met Cecil Rhodes, in their house. My father came in from a trip to the diggings, and I heard him mention that he had met two rather unusual young men and had asked them to come to supper on the following Sunday, or to visit his house when they felt inclined. These men, mentioned so casually, turned out to be Charles Rudd and his friend Cecil Rhodes. It was thus that two friendships began which meant much to me in later years. I was seven years younger than Rudd, which in youth means a big difference, and yet Rudd was the one man I ever came really to love.

We heard discussed round us questions of not only South African but of world-wide importance. Besides the unusually rapid development, and the changes taking place in this outpost of civilization, with consequent difficulties of administration, Griqualand West was a question mark in South Africa's political scene. It was a strategical point on the chess-board of South African and, indeed, European politics. Lord Carnarvon,[2] bent upon a scheme to federate the South African Colonies and Republics, was urging Sir Henry Barkly to insist upon Mr. Southey's doing nothing to alienate the Dutch, while there were foreign interests, financial and political, eager to step in and exploit any difficulties that might arise round the world's richest deposit of diamonds. Above all, Southey and his Council had a most difficult task in

[1] The elected members of this council, which first met on December 21st, 1873 and was prorogued in August 1874, were David Arnot, member for Hay: Henry Green, member for Kimberley; P. J. H. Graham L.L.D., also a member for Kimberley; Francis Thompson, member for Barkley. The official members were the Treasurer General W. Hoskin Giddy; The Attorney-General, John. C. Thompson; and the Secretary, John Blades Currey. Richard Southey, Lieut.-Governor of Griqualand West, was the President.

[2] Secretary of State for the Colonies.

preventing lawlessness among a wild and adventurous element attracted to the fields from every part of the world.

Rhodes's genius for politics may have been awakened by the interminable discussion of these matters. It is certain that his great ideals of federation and toleration, and his desire to work with all elements in South Africa, Dutch, British and native, were engendered at this time. He was an idealist of a very practical kind. A favourite phrase of his from those old days is lodged in my memory. After some long and perhaps over-academic discussion at my father's or a neighbour's house, he would declare, 'Don't deal with hypothetical cases—deal with facts.'

Chapter II

A FIGHT AT CORNFORTH HILL*

WITH a view to settling Griqualand West the Imperial Government offered, to persons willing to be pioneers, perpetual leases (known in South African law as quitrent leases) of blocks of land. It was under such a lease in 1874 that I was given by the Imperial authorities a farm on the Hartz River, about fifty miles from Barkly West. It was the very first farm acquired and occupied by a European in Griqualand West. I named it Cornforth Hill, after our family's seat in Yorkshire. Thus I became the first pioneer on the northern border of Cape Colony. I set about building my homestead and developing the property. Two years later I bought an adjoining farm from Byron Sampson, a homeopathic doctor, who had acquired it as a grant from the natives. I named it Anthorn, after my mother's old home. This name proved to be a curious example of the long arm of coincidence. Anthorn means one thorn tree, and the Sechuana name of the place was Makalanengwe, meaning one thorn tree, which in turn was a translation of the much older Bushman name Tchwe Thanapi (Tchwe—one, Thanapi—thorn tree.) The name came from a huge camelthorn tree growing near a spring on the property, and regarded by the natives as sacred. It marks the boundary between the Mothibi Batlapin and the Mahuruah people, and was the official place for conferences between tribes, and for executions. This ancient landmark was blown down by a gale in 1912. I preserved its trunk.

I remained at Cornforth Hill until the middle of 1878 and in this period of four years I became a prosperous farmer. I was then but a lad, but as I had some three thousand sheep and six hundred head of cattle, with the usual farming implements, I was considered fairly well off, although the cattle and sheep had not the value such things have now.

On the 18th July, 1878, a series of events came to pass, which even at this date I find it hard to recount.

War had broken out among the natives in the northern part of Griqualand, now known as the Bechuanaland Protectorate,

* Now Cornforth Hill Estate, where Senator F. C. Thompson farms.

where years after Major Goold Adams was Resident Commissioner. This was part of a concerted rising of the natives, which began with the Gcalecka War in January 1878 and culminated in the Zulu War and the capture of Cetewayo in 1879. My father and mother, who were still living at Barkly West, became extremely anxious concerning me, and my father decided to pay me a visit. He accordingly arrived at my farm on the 14th July. Only a short while before serious and widespread disturbances had taken place at no great distance from me, and several well-known families, including the Burnesses and the Walters—men, women and children—had been attacked by the natives and butchered in cold blood. Late one night a neighbouring farmer, Mr. William Hunter, who was farming at Boetsap and running a store, sent down to my homestead to say that he had received warning that he would be attacked, and that I ought to know of the danger and prepare to meet it. My father, myself and my cousin William, a North Countryman who was living with me, at once saddled our horses and rode to the home of our neighbour to render him assistance in his defence. On reaching the place we found that the homestead had already been attacked. The natives had crept close up and fired two or three volleys on its inmates. The eldest Hunter had been shot through the leg, which had to be amputated; a servant had been killed, and Mr. Walters wounded. No fighting occurred while we were there. In the darkness we managed to get back to our homestead. By daylight the natives had cleared off, or so we all thought, in the direction of Kuruman. The Hunters left their farm, taking with them what was possible. They lost nearly all their stock, except a herd of cattle that had been sent two days before to Barkly West.

When we returned home late that night we decided that each in turn should sit up and keep guard. I constructed a small stockade about a hundred yards from my house, and made all possible preparations to prevent a surprise. Our force consisted of my father, my cousin, myself and three Koranna boys. As may be imagined, we were all very anxious, not knowing from hour to hour what was going to happen. During the night I had lain down in the open to snatch a little sleep if possible, leaving one of the Korannas on watch, and it must have been about three o'clock in the morning when he aroused me by whispering, 'Chuga, Morena, baretla sela ba rehola.' (Wake up, master, they are attacking and surrounding us.)

The night air was cold and still; the darkness black as Erebus. I strained my ears and listened attentively, but there could be

no mistaking the sound, now every moment becoming more and more distinct. It was the tramp of horses. I judged that the approaching party was within about three hundred yards. We had arranged that whoever happened to be at the stockade should, in case of alarm, fire a shot. After challenging in Sechuana (Putchwa!) and receiving no reply, I fired, meaning if possible to hit somebody. As the report of my rifle died away, all was still as death. But a few seconds later, to my profound astonishment, I heard the clarion notes of a British bugle ring out through the darkness. The sense of relief, mingled with bewilderment, which came over me may better be imagined than described. But before I had time to realize what had happened my little fort had been surrounded, and then I discovered to my horror that I had fired on the Redjackets. I was taken prisoner, and notwithstanding explanations, taken down to the homestead in that role.

The party, I presently found, was a detachment of the 2nd battalion of the 24th regiment of the Line under Captain Brunker. This regiment was afterwards wiped out at Isandhlwana. They had been ordered at this time from the centre of Government at Pretoria (for the Transvaal was then under British rule), to be sent to the scene of action in the Langeberg. They had, it turned out, lost their way, and after wandering for some fifty hours had turned up at my farm.

Captain Brunker's suspicions originated in an incident in 1870, when some two hundred miles from my farm there had been a native rebellion on the Orange River, and I am sorry to relate that a European named McCarthy had taken the side of the natives against the Cape Colonial troops. He was a gun mender and gunpowder maker, had been living for a long time among these natives, and had taken unto himself a native wife. He was discovered in a very amusing manner. After the engagement a number of native prisoners had been taken, among whom were some native women. These women were all standing together, and when the officer commanding turned away for a moment one of the soldiers jokingly slapped a big woman who was standing near. Imagine the surprise of all when the woman, reeling a little to one side, exposed to view McCarthy, who had been concealed under her blankets. He was tried by court martial and shot as a traitor.

When further explanations were given to Captain Brunker I was promptly released. The troopers, as I have said, had lost their way and had been for some fifty-two hours without food.

Luckily I was in a position to afford them relief. I had a good stock of hams and bacon of my own curing for use during the summer months, when the weather is too hot to slaughter sheep or cattle unless the meat is to be eaten immediately. We put the three native boys to make fires while my cousin and I made rooster koekies.[1] We threw open the larder, and by nine o'clock next morning everyone was well fed. The troop remained at the farm until five o'clock that evening, when they resumed their march towards the Langeberg. We accompanied them for some distance, and then my father and cousin turned back. I went on with Brunker to guide him through the valley. We had given the troops supplies of food.

Upon my return to the homestead that night we decided that it was unnecessary to keep guard, as we had Redcoats in the vicinity, and it was unlikely that any hostile natives would remain in the neighbourhood. That night and the following day passed without anything unusual happening, nor was guard kept. On the 18th July, however, having heard fresh rumours, we decided that, as the country was in such an unsettled state, and we might have to remove our stock at any time, it would be best to separate the rams from the ewes, so that there should be no cause for delay in moving. I rose at the first streak of dawn and with my natives was going to the kraals when I saw in the distance a native lad named Mangale coming towards the house. I thought this strange, as all natives in the surrounding country had fled northward. When the boy got to the homestead he told us that his father had sent him to warn us that we would be attacked almost immediately. He had overheard a conversation some twenty miles away the night before, and as he and his father had previously worked for me, they showed their gratitude by giving me warning —one of the few instances of the kind I know of. I warned my cousin and also my father, who was just getting out of bed. We ordered the three natives to get their guns ready, and scarcely had we done so when we saw in the distance a body of thirty mounted Kaffirs galloping down on the homestead. These, as it turned out, were merely the advance party. Most of them were mounted on grey horses and wearing European helmets and soldier's coats. They had surprised a detachment of our troops at Klein Boetsap and defeated them, our men making off in the darkness as best they could and leaving the bulk of their ammunition, horses and clothing, to the enemy. This troop, as was generally

[1] Doughnuts.

the case with our men, had not taken precautions against surprise, and had even neglected to post outlying pickets.

The Kaffirs halted about a hundred and fifty yards from the homestead and there awaited the arrival of a hundred more men. The whole force then concealed themselves in a donga, or dry river bed, which ran round the homestead at a distance of a hundred yards. My father and I agreed that I should attempt to parley with them. I put down my gun in the house behind the door, and stepped out in front, although I must admit that I was very nervous. On my calling that I wished to speak to them they immediately replied with a volley of bullets, but fortunately I was not hit. I went back for my rifle and returned their fire. My father, who had taken up a position on the left hand of the house, behind a little portable blacksmith's forge, repeatedly called to me to keep cool and shoot straight, as our only chance was to make a good stand. He was using an elephant gun loaded with slugs, and was the first to draw blood, hitting one of the leading attackers in the abdomen. A moment later I brought down the second man with a shot through the left shoulder, and then the firing became general.

Owing to the concentrated fire of the natives none of our party was again able to expose himself. So the fighting went on, we for dear life and the Kaffirs for murder, loot and revenge on the white man. We were but six, while they were about two hundred. After fighting for about three hours, we discovered that the natives, by gradually creeping up under cover of the kraal[1] had got to within thirty yards of the homestead. Some had loaded their muzzle-loading guns with greased rag, and by this means eventually succeeded in setting fire to the thatched roof of the dwelling. Bad as our position was, we kept up the fight for two hours longer. Then the flames began to appear inside the house, and our situation became desperate. My cousin, who with two of the Korannas had been defending the rear of the house, was now compelled to retreat. We lifted him through a small window into the front portion of the building. I snatched a muzzle-loading musket from one of the boys and for a time succeeded, by firing blank powder, in keeping down the flames as they appeared in the thatch. Every moment the heat was becoming more intense and the smoke thicker. We could hold out no longer; something must be done, and that very soon. Calling to my father I explained how matters stood in my part of the house, and I could see from

[1] Cattle stockade.

where I stood that the roof at the back was falling in. There was soon no alternative: we had to run the gauntlet or be burned alive. My father, exposing himself fearlessly, coolly walked from his position carrying a revolver, an elephant gun and a butcher's cleaver. On reaching my part of the building he opened the small window I have mentioned, and was then able to see the extent and progress of the flames, which indeed singed his whiskers as he looked through.

"We must run for it," he said. "Keep about fifty yards apart and everyone for himself."

My father was the first to leap out of the burning house, and I followed. I had got but a short distance when I was struck by a ball fired by the native chief Galishwe[1] at twelve yards range. It hit me near the point of the lowest rib on the left side, breaking the rib and coming out at the back. By this time my father and cousin and two of the Korannas had got well ahead of me, I having been turned completely round like a top by the force of the bullet. Up to this time no one else had been hit, but when crossing the donga about a hundred and fifty yards away my father received a shot in his heel which crippled him, although he was still able to run. In getting over the donga I placed my hand against my wound, which had become painful. In doing so I stumbled, and as I fell my middle finger was driven into the opening. The broken rib from either side closed on the finger, which thus remained fixed in the wound up to the middle joint. I had only one cartridge left in my gun, my pouch having been shot away; but I resolved to fight to the last. I was a good runner and did not at first feel the full effects of my injury. I thus soon began to overtake my father and cousin, but as I approached them thirty mounted men charged down on our left flank and galloped between me and my father.

I saw my cousin captured and my father surrounded, and several shots fired into him at close range. I draw a veil over the tragedy then enacted. It sickens me to recall it, and my grief and rage even at this interval of time awake afresh at the remembrance. It is easy to talk of forgetting and forgiving, but only those who have suffered a cruel wrong can know how hard it is to do either.

Knowing that my father was dead, and realizing my all but helpless condition, I suddenly remembered that there was a well with some five feet of water close by. Quick as thought I ran to this, jumped in and hid myself with only my nose and eyes above

[1] Appendix B.

water. One of my three Korannas was captured. The other two, after leaving the house, had run down the donga and on seeing me leap into the well called to me to get out, as there might still be a chance of escape if we could creep into the long grass on the opposite side of the donga. They helped me by holding the end of my rifle, which I had dropped into a bush, and by much pulling and struggling, enduring agonies from my wound and imprisoned hand, I managed to get out. The pain was now terrible, and the loss of blood was weakening me. My finger was still embedded fast in the wound.

I told the boys that it would be a mistake to go into the long grass, and that it would be better to keep down the dry bed of the river. This we fortunately did, for it turned out that some of the natives had taken possession of this same long grass, and had we entered it we should have certainly fallen into their hands. By this time, having completed the mutilation of my father's body and the torturing of my cousin, they had turned their attention to me. We had got about a mile down the donga and had almost reached a thick clump of bushes, when they saw us and gave chase. I continued to run fairly well and still retained my loaded rifle, but at the sight of the coming horde of savages I felt my spirits begin to sink. Turning to the Korannas I said, 'Boys, I'm done for. You had better make away as fast as you can.' While they continued their flight I sank from loss of blood, almost fainting, to the ground. I had, however, the presence of mind before losing my senses to crawl a short distance into the bush off the track, the enemy being, I should judge, about a mile away. I lay hidden in the bush and in a faint for some time, and only regained consciousness as the natives were on the point of reaching the spot where I was concealed. Fortunately for me, at that moment they saw the two Korannas crossing a piece of open ground and resumed the chase, no doubt concluding that I, who was a renowned runner in the country, must have outstripped my companions. On losing sight of the two boys again, four of the natives returned to where I had last been seen, about twenty yards from where I then lay. To my intense relief, while they were taking up the spoor, a loud shout of 'Kebali' (There they go!) caused them to return to the chase. With difficulty I managed to rise and get a little farther into the bush, my wound paining me considerably, for I was quite unable to extricate my finger from between the ends of my broken rib.

Although I had escaped thus far, my danger was not over. I had hardly got another hundred and fifty yards into the bush

when I found myself at no great distance from a transport waggon, laden with goods intended for a trader in the north. The natives had seen it too, and with bated breath I watched them, sixty yards away, galloping down to loot it. As soon as they reached it they dismounted, leaving their horses to graze as they liked, native fashion, with the bridles thrown over their heads. Then each of the natives helped himself to whatever article on the waggon struck his fancy. The white men who had been in charge of the waggon, having seen the attack on my homestead, had made off into the bush. The horses grazed in all directions, and some came close to the bush which hid me from view. By breaking off small branches to use as switches, and by throwing sand at the animals, I managed to drive them away some little distance. After the natives had completely looted the waggon, their leader gave the signal to remount. In rounding up the horses two natives passed within ten or twelve feet of me. I held my breath and could hear the beating of my heart. I had determined, if seen, to kill one man at least, but provided I escaped notice, I was content to leave matters as they were. All the natives moved back to the wrecked and burning homestead and looted my sheep, cattle, waggons and horses.

Weak as I was, I managed to scrape out a hole in which I buried my rifle, feeling it too heavy to carry further, and as I was unable to rise I started to crawl. I had crawled about half a mile when the country opened out into a plain, some nine miles in length without a vestige of bush, grass or cover of any kind. I saw a party of natives, who had evidently left the main body to search for cattle, coming directly towards me. Helpless, wounded and unarmed, the thought came over me that this time I must yield to the inevitable and submit to my fate; and then came the desire to live. The country was of that red, sandy soil so well known to travellers in South Africa, and as I looked helplessly about in search of some hiding place what was my joy to discover, only a few yards from me, an antbear hole large enough to admit a full-grown man. These holes are well known to South African hunters. I lost not a moment in concealing myself, feet foremost, and for two hours remained quite still in the hole without daring to move. At length, fearing that if I remained much longer I should perish from thirst, I struggled forth and, having crept a considerable distance, succeeded in getting on my legs and walking in a bent and crouching attitude.

After struggling on for what seemed an age, but was in reality only a few hours, I came upon a waggon driven by a native boy

who had at one time been in my employ. He had been certified as insane and had been for some months under lock and key, but having recovered he was now returning to his home. He consequently was not in any way connected with the local troubles and was quite willing to help me on my way. At six o'clock that evening I arrived at a farm called Spitzkop, some sixteen miles distant from Cornforth Hill.

At Spitzkop I found my neighbour, Robert Spalding, with his wife, a son of sixteen, an aged Scotsman named Donald Martin and seven or eight young children. I leave the reader to imagine my feelings. Although I was in a desperate plight, the knowledge that I was safe for the present and in the company of friends greatly restored my spirits. The house was a substantial one under an iron roof, surrounded by a loopholed stone wall six feet high. The Spaldings were quite unaware of what had happened at my farm, and on seeing me and hearing my news Mrs. Spalding was naturally scared. The lady and old Donald Martin gave me kindly help, and by drawing my broken rib apart succeeded in liberating my finger from the wound where it had been embedded for ten hours. I suffered intense pain during this operation. As the finger was released and extricated it brought with it a long thread of congealed blood, half an inch in diameter and twelve inches long.

There was no time to have my wounds even roughly dressed. All promptly set about preparing to defend the house. The party was so small that even I, although quite unable to stand, could not be spared, and it was arranged that my bed should be raised to the level of a loophole at one of the windows, and that I was to command the window with a rifle. The pain of my wound increased every moment.

Hardly had the arrangements been completed when, at a distance of seventeen hundred yards, the same natives who had attacked my homestead were seen approaching. The evening was fast closing in, and only a desultory fire was kept up on both sides during the night. Mrs. Spalding loaded my rifle for me and I fired whenever a flash from one of the natives' guns afforded the chance of a hit. So excited and nervous was my state that I was unable to take any food. None of our party had time to think of eating, and a drink of water from time to time was all I had. Thus the long weary night passed, and daylight revealed the situation. The natives were surrounding us, and were now about twelve hundred yards away. Knowing how well the house was fortified, and probably uncertain of the strength of the garrison, for at times we had kept up a pretty smart fire, they were afraid

of approaching too near. Throughout the whole of that day, by firing a few shots from time to time, the attacking party was held in check; but it was with an anxiety approaching dread that we contemplated passing another night of siege.

As the sun began to sink, my excitement and pain made me rambling in my speech, and everyone thought me delirious. No doubt I was a little light-headed, but I remember all that went on. About midnight, when I had closed my aching eyes for a moment and fallen into a painful, half-waking state, I distinctly heard the distant sound of a bugle. I roused myself instantly and called to Mrs. Spalding, telling her what I had heard. She immediately went to her husband at the other end of the building and told him what I had said. He replied: 'Don't encourage Thompson; he is becoming delirious. Keep him up and don't let him go away, as it will mean one gun less.' We only had three all told.

Another five minutes elapsed, I listening attentively, and then I knew I was not mistaken for I distinctly heard the 'Advance'. There is nothing like life on a border ranch to sharpen one's sense of hearing. Mrs. Spalding had also heard the bugle call, but probably fearing another snub from her husband said nothing. The natives drew off rapidly, and in a few minutes there appeared a force of five hundred soldiers and we were safe.

For thirty hours I had had no food, only a little water. Now came the reaction. I went off into a swoon; indeed I must, from the time I was wounded, have fainted at least thirty times. When I came to myself, I found that my clothes had been cut off and that I was being examined by two medical men. One of them, Dr. William Murphy, a man I could never sufficiently thank, was well known in Kimberley and was acting on the staff. The second was a military doctor. I saw one look askance at the other and heard him distinctly say, 'Mortification has set in.' Then they withdrew to the adjoining room and held a short consultation, and I asked the orderly left with me (whose name I think was Miller) what the feeling of mortification was. He replied, 'A sort of dead sensation.' Now for the first time I began to be a little afraid, and began to feel about my wounded side, and my fears were certainly not allayed when I felt the dead and numb feeling described by Miller. The two doctors returned, and it was decided to operate at once. They offered me chloroform, but I refused. I had no experience of its effects, and said that I would prefer to undergo the operation without it. Four men were then called in to lift me and put me on a bed. My hands were put through the top of the bed and tied, and my feet were bound to the bedposts,

the four men holding me down. Dr. Murphy then operated by cutting away the piece of the rib and probing my wound. A piece of flannel which had been forced in by the bullet was found, and extracted by pushing it out through the wound at the back. The pain was dreadful, and I shiver even now at the thought of it. As the examination by the medical men showed that part of the intestine had been grazed by the bullet, I was not permitted either to eat or drink. In this condition I lay for eight days, being kept asleep most of the time by morphia injections. At the end of that period I was sufficiently strong to be moved to Barkly West in a cart rigged up as an ambulance, Dr. Murphy accompanying me. There I found my dear mother waiting for me.

While I was recovering from my wound at Spitzkop, there had been a funeral at Barkly West; the funeral of my father's remains. He had been shot through the hips, and a ramrod had been thrust down his throat until its point came out in the middle of the back. He had been scalped and his legs and arms chopped off. Only the mutilated head, and the trunk transfixed by the ramrod, were left.

The natives had captured my cousin and, after stripping him naked, had tortured and mutilated him in a peculiarly fiendish manner. They left him for dead, but he almost miraculously survived and was picked up by troops fifteen miles from the scene of the fight. He never completely recovered, however, and died in England five years later.

Hundreds of people from all parts of Griqualand West attended my father's funeral. Many who did not know him went to show their sympathy in an uncommon visitation of fate.

So ended the hunting expedition of 1850. Africa had claimed him as a victim of her evolution from barbarism, affording him no other memorial than a humble share in that task, and the irony of being murdered by those he had befriended. Yet such are among the authentic memorials of Africa, from which alone her story can be truly told.

My mother had been twenty-eight years in Africa when this crushing blow fell upon her. England and Home and the hills of Cumberland were far behind her at the end of a stony road, over an horizon long grown dim in African dust. She turned in her affliction to nursing me. She lived on to a ripe old age, and we were fast friends to the very end.

I was in bed for about forty days at Barkly West, and when able to dress my wounds I was sent for by the Governor, Sir Owen Lanyon, who asked whether I was willing to join the Imperial

Civil Service of Griqualand West. As I had lost all worldly possessions. I accepted the offer but begged permission to be allowed to go through the remaining part of the campaign under Colonel Warren. This request was granted, and I received a commission as a lieutenant in the Intelligence Department on Colonel Warren's staff. At the end of the war, which lasted another two months, I was appointed British Resident and Chief Inspector of Native Reserves in Griqualand West, and carried out the Amnesty of 1878. This was a highly responsible position for one so young. I was a lonely figure, as I stood there representing Her Majesty's Government on the northern border of Cape Colony, facing the uneasy Transvaal and the wilds of Bechuanaland.

I had special authority to settle all disputes between the native chiefs and to locate them on their reserves. At the end of a native war, after an amnesty had been proclaimed, the natives were invited to return to their reserves, bringing with them their wives and children and such possessions as the war had left them. Each man then received a written document, setting forth how many wives, children, cattle and stock he possessed; and a linen badge. This badge freed him from molestation by the police, and he was placed with his particular clan in whatever part of the reserve the officer deemed advisable. He was then a disarmed native, and the document he held was equivalent to a pardon by the Government. He was given corn land, and became entitled to use the tribe's grazing ground. For all this he paid one pound a year to the Imperial Government as a tax, reduced to ten shillings a year on the annexation of Griqualand West to Cape Colony.

At the end of three months, when the natives had decided to return to their reserves, the Government ordered that all the natives of that district should be disarmed, and for this purpose placed at my disposal a force of seventy-five men of the Diamond Fields Horse, under Captain Green. I decided, however, to attempt the task without any display of force, and wrote to the Government requesting that these men might be kept at their different stations. Attended only by Captain Green I visited all the locations and succeeded in inducing the people to conform to the order and immediately surrender their arms. Some twelve hundred or fifteen hundred guns were handed in, each two men being promised a plough in return. This was done at my suggestion, and on the written authority of the Governor, but I regret to say that the ploughs were never supplied, Instead a few shillings were offered for each gun, and this the natives refused. To the best of my knowledge this is the only instance in South Africa of a completely peaceful disarmament of natives.

Chapter III

WITH RHODES IN BECHUANALAND

IT was at the end of 1881 that fate led my steps to the little town of Malmesbury in Cape Colony. I was once more established in life, and I decided to take a holiday. My married sister Penelope was settled in Malmesbury and I decided to visit her on my way to Capetown. The doctor of the town had recently married the second daughter of Colonel Rees, Imperial Surveyor, who was engaged on work in the forts at Capetown and Simonstown. Destiny willed that one of his daughters should be visiting her recently married sister at the time I arrived in Malmesbury.

A ball for charity was the event of the moment, and most of the preparations for the supper were made in my sister's house. It was from an upper window that I first saw the girl who was to become my wife. She came to take her share of the responsibilities for the dance. I made up my mind that she should be my only partner in the evening, but I was too optimistic. I succeeded in booking one dance after a desperate struggle at the edge of the crowd, but even this she had booked with two partners and I was the unlucky one. It did not take me long to follow her back to Capetown, and on February 16th, 1882, I married Georgina Rees. She has been my companion and friend in many adventures, and it proved the luckiest day of my life.

Not four years had elapsed since the attack on the farm, but the natives in our area were completely settled and peaceful. There was thus nothing to fear when I took my wife to live at Cornforth Hill. My work took me far afield and often I had to leave her alone. I have even left her on guard with a gun over some thief or miscreant who had been brought to me to be delivered up to justice. She always treated such occasions as a joke. To illustrate the changed outlook on the native position, I may mention that it was my general rule simply to put the headman or chief in charge. He would make a demarcation round the homestead and refuse entry to my house without permission. It was a perfectly safe proposition.

One day a curious thing happened. I relate it chiefly because it is a true tale of the man 'Scotty' Smith, round whom so many romantic and rather highly coloured stories were woven.

It was sundown and my wife was returning alone from a ride. As she was crossing the very donga in which I had hidden when I was escaping from the natives a few years before, her horse shied. A tall figure rose from the long reeds, which had completely hidden him as he lay resting. My wife was surprised at his polite bearing and good looks, and although she afterwards admitted that she was slightly nervous at meeting a stranger barring her path in such lonely surroundings, she nodded to him and was rewarded with an astonishingly low and courtly bow. Shortly afterwards I returned home and my wife told me of the incident. As darkness fell we were told that a white man had come to ask for a night's lodging. It was a not unusual request in that part of the world and I did not go out to see him, but gave orders that he should be cared for. After the attack in 1878 I had built my new homestead with a large courtyard surrounded by high walls. This courtyard was large enough to hold all my stock, and the walls, provided with holes for rifles, were designed as a defensive work. They are still standing to day. It was in one of the rooms built inside this quadrangle that the stranger was lodged. We sent him a good dinner and thought no more of the matter. At dawn the next day I was awakened by a tap at the window of my bedroom. I have often wondered how it was that in that rambling house he knew at which window to knock.

'Good-bye, Mr. Thompson. Thank you for your hospitality.'

The tone was cultured and the words unusual for the tramp I had imagined I was entertaining. At sunrise my natives informed me that my whole troop of forty horses had disappeared during the night. Two hours later, however, they were all sent back, and with them a note to me apologizing for their having been taken in error with others. The note informed me that my guest had not intended to take my horses, because he had eaten my salt and had been well treated, but it was an unpardonable mistake on the part of his servants. I learnt afterwards that my visitor was the notorious cattle rustler and horse thief 'Scotty' Smith. I heard of him again in Stellaland.

It will be remembered that the natives of Griqualand West had been induced to hand in their arms. The natives of an adjacent territory, the Taungs Reserve, had been allowed to retain theirs, and the tribe not long afterwards started to interfere with their unarmed neighbours. Tribal fights ensued. As was so often the way, the conflicting parties each asked help of the white man. In this case they sought the help of Adriaan de la Rey, a member of a well-known Boer family, and a brother of the famous Boer

War general who was shot by misadventure in Johannesburg in 1914 just before the rebellion of that year. Adriaan was noted for his tremendous strength and size, and so was distinguished by the soubriquet 'Groot' Adriaan. He gathered about a thousand Transvaal Boers under his leadership and they promptly annexed the territories of both chiefs. One of the chiefs, David Massouw, then attacked the Boers and killed two well-known Transvaalers, Schweizer and Renecke, who had been officers in the German army. In the end Massouw and his tribe were annihilated. Schweizer and Renecke are commemorated in the name of a district of the Transvaal called after them. It was included in the Republic when the western boundary was fixed. Before the boundary was demarcated, however, the territories of the two chiefs were declared republics. The first to be proclaimed was Stellaland, with its capital at Vryburg. The name of Stellaland was derived from Finlay's comet, which was first observed about this time. A Volksraad was established, with Mr. van Niekerk as president. Paper money and stamps were issued, title deeds were printed and taxes were levied.

Sir Charles Warren had policed the Bechuana country for a few years before the advent of the Boers, but the Imperial Government had gradually withdrawn this protection without warning the chiefs. The natives then found themselves, after being partially disarmed by the British, without protection of any kind. This part of the world, if only nominally, was within the sphere of British influence, and thus on the declaration of the republics the British Government was forced to take the matter up.

As the chief official on the border I was an observer at very close quarters of the game being played out in Bechuanaland. In these great native territories there had been, before the advent of the Boers, many involved disputes about supremacy and tribal rights. These were of such an intricate character that they could be understood only by those versed in the hereditary native claims and differences of opinion. Now had come into the picture these so-called republics, peopled for the most part by a wild, freebooting element. The land they claimed was close to the Transvaal border. Some of it, they declared, had been given to them by the natives in reward for services rendered. The rest of it, they said, was theirs by right of conquest. Some of the claims were undoubtedly valid, some fantastic, but it was no longer merely a land dispute. It had become a question of high politics —the question whether the British Government, Cape Colony or the South African Republic should control Bechuanaland,

Repeated representations had been made by the London Missionary Society, but there were other keen eyes on the scene. The outcome of the missionary agitation in London was that the Rev. J. M. MacKenzie, then residing at Hankey, a small village near Port Elizabeth, was appointed Commissioner to take over the country, which now for the first time was named British Bechuanaland. The missionaries had won the first round, but they had little or no support in South Africa, and eventually it was decided that Captain Graham Bower, who had retired from the Royal Navy and was then Secretary to the Governor of Cape Colony, should be sent to Bechuanaland to examine the situation. He asked me to accompany him and together we got into close touch with van Niekerk and his followers.[1]

There was never any doubt in my mind that the Boers of the Transvaal were in the deepest sympathy with these republics. MacKenzie, unfortunately, fell foul of the Boers. He was an honest, good and brilliantly able man, but mistakenly assumed that he had personal influence with the people with whom he was dealing. The truth was that his attitude to the natives, that of a missionary who had spent his life among them, was diametrically opposed to the Boer attitude, and prevented the Boers from placing any confidence in him. The antagonism of the Boers to his administration may be gauged by a speech by Paul Kruger in the Volksraad on his return from the London Convention:

'He could not say that the British Government had not been willing to hear him, yet it had been induced to withhold justice from the deputation by lies and fraud on the part of traitors and intriguers, of whom Mr. MacKenzie was one.'

This was very violent language and it is repeated here only to explain the Boer attitude.

In July 1884 Stellaland was on the eve of a crisis. The freebooters had withdrawn from Vryburg and had gone into an armed camp or laager at Commando Drift, just north of the present Home Rule diggings. There seemed to me but one chance to avoid hostilities, which was that Rhodes should try to exercise what influence he could to avoid the necessity of a call to arms. The impending chaos in these territories cut right across his plans for opening up the north by way of Bechuanaland, and I went

[1] In a report to the Governor, Captain Graham Bower wrote on April 3rd, 1884 (Blue Book No. 4036, No. 46): 'I was fortunate in securing the services of Mr. Frank Thompson, Inspector of Native Locations in Griqualand West, who possessed a thorough knowledge of Dutch as well as of the various Bechuana dialects.'

to Kimberley to tell him that between MacKenzie and the Boers his view of the future was in grave jeopardy.[1] I knew that he did not want a conflict between the Boers and the missionaries to be settled by the Imperial Government over Cape Colony's head. I suggested to him that the time had come to offer his services to Sir Hercules Robinson, the Governor of Cape Colony, and after we had discussed the position I sent a telegram to Sir Hercules suggesting that Rhodes should be sent as a special Commissioner to supersede MacKenzie.

The Governor telegraphed in reply, 'Come to the end of the line in Kimberley.' The telegraph line having been cleared, the Governor asked me on the wire if I thought it was possible that Rhodes could be persuaded to go. Rhodes was standing beside me, but I asked the Governor for half an hour to find him and discuss the matter. For that half-hour we walked round the Market Square, and when we went back to the post office Rhodes took up the conversation with the Governor and agreed to the proposals. He stipulated that I should be granted leave to accompany him as secretary, guide and interpreter.[2]

Stellaland was about a hundred miles wide and two hundred miles long, bounded on the east by what was then the South African Republic, and on the west by German territory. Several years before, the German Government had asked the Imperial Government for this territory. The Imperial Government consulted the Government of Cape Colony, and the Prime Minister, Sir Thomas Scanlen, upon the advice of several of his followers, among whom were John X. Merriman, Charles T. Jones and Ludwig Wiener, expressed the opinion that the country was nothing but a sandy waste, and the Germans were welcome to it. Thus the Germans gained a foothold in Southern Africa, and for political reasons regarded it as extremely valuable.

We in the Cape, with our unsuspicious English ways, were hardly

[1] Telegram received in Capetown July 30th, 1884:

From Mr. Rhodes, Kimberley. To Captain Graham Bower, Capetown.

After news I have received from Thompson, I think I ought to see the Governor. It seems clear the whole position requires to be reconsidered.

[2] Telegram received in Kimberley July 31st, 1884:

From Captain Graham Bower, Capetown. To Hon. C. J. Rhodes, Kimberley.

Thompson has been informed he may accompany you, if he can provide for his duty during absence. MacKenzie will probably be at Vryburg; but, in any case if you go via Taungs you are I think sure to meet him. (Blue Book 4213.)

a match for the machinations of foreign intriguers, and many did not realize that the Germans had determined to combine with and exploit the Boers in the Transvaal. Some of the principal officials of the South African Republic were foreigners. Dr. Bok, a Hollander, was State Secretary, and Dr. Leyds, another Hollander, his valuable second. Many Germans were appointed to the police force. Paul Kruger, in fact, was determined to associate with any devil rather than the Englishman, and so fell an easy prey to interests capable of exploiting this fixed idea.

Rhodes saw the drift of affairs very clearly, and so did Sir Hercules Robinson, although perhaps more slowly. Rhodes realized that if the Stellaland Boers were allowed to maintain the republic it would inevitably be absorbed by the Transvaal, in much the same way as Vryheid, originally a slice of Zululand, had been absorbed. In other words, he regarded the Stellaland Republic as a mere blind for the expansion of the Transvaal. Had the Transvaal shown leanings towards Cape Colony, or had it stood alone, its thrusting out across the trade route to the north would not have presented any great problem; but a Transvaal hostile to the Cape, falling increasingly under German and Hollander influence, with the German Empire established on its borders, was an entirely different matter. Rhodes saw in it a deadly threat to his plans for opening up the north, and for that threat Stellaland was but another name.

Jan Hofmeyr agreed with Rhodes in trying to deflect the Transvaal back into the orbit of Cape Colony, and so was able to work with him. They ran side by side towards the same aim of making the north an expansion of Cape Colony, although Hofmeyr had his own ideas of a South African Federated State. But Rhodes was working with him, and this was Rhodes's certificate of character for the Stellalanders.

Shortly after the telegraphic communications I have mentioned, MacKenzie was recalled, Rhodes was appointed Imperial Commissioner, I was appointed his secretary, and we set out. On the way we stopped at my farm for a few hours. Rhodes stepped into my wife's sitting-room, and taking a kit-bag swept into it as many of her books as he could find.

'Something to do if I am faced with a weary and boring wait in the veld,' he said.

My wife, I remember, expostulated. He had a habit of reading a few chapters and then, if the book pleased him, tearing off the part he had finished and handing it on to me, while he read the rest. He said this would make the book more interesting as we

could share the pleasure of the story, and the discussions would be more intelligent. It was the action of a future millionaire, but hardly good for my wife's little library.

We found that MacKenzie had come to Cornforth Hill hoping to meet Rhodes, but had left again *en route* for the Cape. We hurried after him, however, and succeeded in meeting him some miles away. This was, I believe, the only interview he had with Rhodes about the Bechuana question.

We took relays of horses at Cornforth Hill, as I had plenty of good mounts. I often laughed at the sight of Rhodes on horseback. He never learnt to ride well, although in later years he imported and bred the best horses in South Africa. He was too loosely knit to make a good rider, had a very careless seat, and no horse was fast enough for him.

Our journey took us eastward close to the Transvaal border, where the Stellaland Boers had gone into laager. They were in a very determined state of mind, for in their conquest of the country several of their comrades had fallen. It did not seem to count with them that a number of natives had fallen also. At this time the feeling in England was in favour of the policy called 'scuttle.' Mr. Gladstone thought that we already had enough land in Africa and had no wish to annex more. Rhodes had no desire to oust the Boers as individuals, and it was not practical politics to try to annex Bechuanaland to Cape Colony forthwith, but it was of cardinal importance to be rid of the Stellaland Republic. After considerable thought, and interminable discussions with me, he decided to suggest to Lord Derby, the Colonial Secretary, that the Boers who had occupied the land should be given titles to their farms on condition that they accepted a British title and thus became British subjects. This would leave the situation open for annexation either by Cape Colony or by the Imperial Government. Rhodes regarded annexation to Cape Colony as the true solution, for it had the merit of eliminating what he called 'the Imperial factor'—intervention in South African affairs by the British Government.

Rhodes, always a practical man, realized that as Commissioner his powers were limited, and he feared that if he made a grant to the Boers of their farms his action might not be ratified by the British Government. He accordingly decided that I should go in alone to negotiate, for if we should come to an agreement, and our terms were repudiated by Lord Derby, he could escape by saying that I had exceeded my authority in making the offer.

We outspanned a mile outside the laager, and I went on. I

spent all that day discussing matters with the Stellalanders, and several times Rhodes sent for me. Each time I sent back a message that things were panning out as he wished and that he must not be in a hurry. At first the Boers seemed obdurate, but I contrived to keep the question open until late that night. When I returned to camp Rhodes declared that he would not keep my offer open but would inspan next morning. We went to bed and I begged him to let me go down, as a last shot, next day. He at last consented, but insisted that he would not waste more time as he wished to return to tell the Governor in Capetown that the only solution was 'Force'.

The next morning he waited until ten o'clock and then sent again, warning me that if I did not come soon he would leave me. I wrote a short note begging him to have a little more patience. At two o'clock he inspanned the waggon, but I sent again urging him to wait, as I felt sure that the Boers would accept. He agreed then to wait until the evening, and after that to break off all talk. At sundown I persuaded the Boers to say that they would take British title, and a provisional document was drawn up. When it was laid before Rhodes he agreed, but as a saving clause, his line of retreat, he wrote in his own handwriting that the promise of title must be approved by the British Government.

As soon as possible Rhodes got into telegraphic communication with Sir Hercules Robinson, who said that feeling in London ran so high that he feared that Lord Derby would not dare to ratify the agreement. Rhodes argued that the only alternative was to send out ten thousand soldiers, an exceedingly costly business, but even if the Boers were thus turned off their farms the Imperial Government would have to take possession of the land, and exactly the same Boers would buy the farms at fifty pounds each. The High Commissioner was convinced, and in turn moved Lord Derby to approve the proposal.

Rhodes had written to Capetown asking that Captain Graham Bower be again sent up, this time to act as his deputy[1] in Stellaland, while he turned his attention to negotiations with an even more determined set of men at Rooi Grond, farther north, who had set up the republic of Goshen.

The agreement with the Stellalanders[2] was finally signed at

[1] 'Every detail of Government', he wrote, 'also requires entire reorganization, and there is no one here on whom I can rely for assistance in case of my absence at Rooi Grond, and I am anxious that Mr. Thompson should accompany me.' (Blue Book 4213, p. 110.)

[2] Appendix C.

Commando Drift on the 8th September, 1884. The Boers were there, well armed and mounted, to the number of five hundred. Thus Stellaland was secured to the British Crown at no financial cost. I think Rhodes acted in the best interests of both the British and the Cape Governments. His main object, of course, was to keep the trade route to the interior open, and in this he succeded. This was the first step towards realizing his daydreams—to open a way through the continent from the Cape to Cairo—and he took it in 1884.

The people concerned in the Land of Goshen Republic, at Rooi Grond, were some six hundred Transvaal burgers, headed by Mr. Nicholas Gey van Pittius, who had been invited by Moshetti, a Baralong chief of the Ramapulana tribe, occupying a strip of territory in north-east Bechuanaland, Kunana, to help him in a quarrel with the paramount chief Montsioa, whose head station was at Mafeking. Montsioa had always leaned towards the British, and years before had made an alliance with them. Some British people had lived for many years with him, and when it came to fighting they took up arms on his side. Among them were men named Bethel, Walker, Roland and James Gordon. Moshetti made two or three desperate attacks on Montsioa, and in the second fight Bethel, Walker and Gordon were killed, as well as a hundred and fifty of Montsioa's natives. This engagement took place at Seleries, near Rietfontein, about twelve miles south of Mafeking. On the Boer side no one was killed, but in a fight on the following day they lost three, of whom two were brothers named Coetzee.

Two days after this fight Rhodes and I, having reached the agreement in Stellaland, started from Vryburg for the Goshen area, following the road within the Transvaal boundary. We were obliged to do this as the Goshenites would not allow us to get anywhere near Mafeking. Our object was to arrange peace, if possible, between the contending factions, and to settle the matter on the lines that had been successful in Stellaland.

The Convention of 1884 between Great Britain and the Transvaal contained a clause to the effect that, whenever trouble occurred on the border, either party had the right to call upon the other for assistance. By virtue of this clause Sir Hercules Robinson addressed a communication to the Transvaal Republic, the outcome of which was that General Joubert, with a small force of artillery, was ordered to Rooi Grond, which was on the Republic's western border. It was an open secret, however, that the Goshenites had the full sympathy of the Transvaal people.

We arrived at Rooi Grond, coming by way of Lichtenburg, at

ten in the morning. I, acting on instructions from Rhodes, crossed the Transvaal border into country which, although now in the hands of filibusters, was really in the British sphere of influence. I went to Gey van Pittius's tent and met him there. I found that he had styled himself 'President of the Goshen Republic', and that a government possessing several administrative departments had already been organized. I informed him that I came with a message from Rhodes, the commissioner of Bechuanaland. This reference to Rhodes as the Commissioner of Bechuanaland, part of which country they were then occupying, gave offence.

'And who the hell is Mr. Rhodes?' somebody asked.

I was at once taken prisoner and thrown into a wood and iron hut, there to await the pleasure of the wrathful President and his Council. After an hour or so I was released and brought before the President, who told me to inform Mr. Rhodes that the Goshen Republic in no way acknowledged him, and that he had no right to style himself Commissioner of that part of the country as it had been won by conquest from Montsioa. I was further instructed to say that the President would not discuss matters with Mr. Rhodes unless the latter would agree as follows:

Firstly: To acknowledge the independence of the Goshen Republic as a free Government.

Secondly: To pay over a sum of £25,000.

Thirdly: To draw a boundary line to the westward, between Bechuanaland and the new Republic.

Lastly: To move the Chief Montsioa from his stronghold at Mafeking, and remove all his defences and fortifications.

Even while the President was giving me this message, his forces were attacking Montsioa with cannon and rifle. I could hear the noise of the conflict.

I returned to Rhodes and delivered the message. He sent me back with a written reply to the effect that he could not enter into negotiations while hostilities were in progress against one of Her Majesty's subjects, but that if hostilities ceased he was prepared to discuss matters. This reply was shown to General Joubert before its despatch.

I delivered this message, which was treated with contempt.

Meanwhile, the attack on Montsioa was pursued with redoubled vigour, the attacking force consisting of five hundred Boers and a thousand natives. Rhodes then called upon General Joubert, I acting as interpreter, for the friendly co-operation of his force to restore order, as provided in the Convention. The attacking force was but a few hundred yards from the Transvaal border,

and neither Rhodes nor I could see any difficulty in the way of Joubert's intervention. Nevertheless General Joubert said that his Government had given him strict instruction not to cross the border on any account. Yet we discovered next day that at the moment we had been calling upon Joubert to intervene in terms of the Convention, a waggon was being loaded with rifles and ammunition at Lichtenburg, in the Transvaal, for use in the attack on Montsioa. The Transvaal Republic subsequently denied all knowledge of this, but as a matter of fact members of Joubert's force helped to load the waggon, which then crossed to Goshen within a hundred yards of Joubert's camp.

This second refusal by the Rooi Grond people to lay down their arms brought matters to a climax, and Rhodes dictated to me a letter addressed to them. I have lost the copy, but substantially the letter read as follows:

'I have attempted to discuss matters with your people in a friendly way; you have refused, and you have tried to extort conditions from me with a pistol to my ear. I see no alternative but to advise the British Government to turn you out of the country by force.'

I delivered this letter and immediately afterwards Rhodes and I started off down country, leaving General Joubert and his force at Rooi Grond. But before leaving Rhodes said to the Boer General, 'From you, General Joubert, I have not had the co-operation promised by your Government under the Convention. I am sorry to state that I shall have to report to the British authorities accordingly.'

These remarks got noised abroad, and the Rooi Grond people arranged with Moshetti's natives to waylay Rhodes and me on our way to the south. For, with Rhodes as a hostage, they thought they would be able to extort whatever terms they liked.

We left immediately darkness fell and continued our journey until nine o'clock at night, when we outspanned. I had in readiness two sets of ponies, on which Rhodes was to escape in case of necessity. They were tethered near him, and I took my rifle and walked back three hundred yards along the road to keep watch. We had agreed that if anybody approached I should fire to warn Rhodes, whereupon he and the Zulu horse-boy would mount and be off. My capture would have had no significance. It so happened, however, that in the darkness we had got on the wrong track, for in the morning we found ourselves twelve miles within the Transvaal, where the natives would naturally not think of looking for us. On resuming our journey we made for a point a hundred

and eighteen miles north of Barkly West, so as to get in touch with the Stellaland people.

The Cape Parliament, which was watching Bechuanaland intently, was about to be prorogued, and it was advisable to get in touch with the Governor before the session closed. By following the line of police camps through the southern portion of Bechuanaland and Griqualand, where horses were obtainable every sixteen or twenty miles, and by hard riding, we covered the hundred and eighteen miles in nine and a half hours. This, I think, is record travelling for that part of the country, although we each used seven horses. On arriving at Barkly West Rhodes went straight to the telegraph office and sat down to converse on the wire with the Governor at Capetown. There Rhodes sat from nine o'clock at night until breakfast next morning. It was a tremendous feat of endurance after the journey he had just finished.

He put the whole position before the Governor and suggested that the Cape Government should at once annex Bechuanaland. The Cape Parliament declined to do so. I think this was an unfortunate mistake. In the result the Warren expedition became necessary, with many complications. As matters turned out in the end, however, all happened for the best.

Van Niekerk, President of Stellaland, had begged Rhodes to let him go with a few of his friends to try his hand at inducing van Pittius to discuss matters, on the same lines as the Stellalanders had done. We waited for a week for van Niekerk's return, when he reported that nothing could be done, and that van Pittius was determined to make a stand.

After all our efforts to arrange matters with the Rooigronders had failed, Rhodes recommended, as the only practical course, that the Imperial Government should send out an expedition and, as Sir Charles Warren was so well known in the country, that he should be in command. Rhodes then returned to Vryburg in Stellaland, and I resumed my official duties in Griqualand West.

On the arrival of the expedition from England, six months afterwards, I received a commission as lieutenant on Sir Charles's staff and served for a short time. My service came to an end because of a difference of opinion between Rhodes and Warren regarding the settlement of Stellaland, which was then an accomplished fact. I had asserted at the mess table that General Warren, with his forces, was in Bechuanaland to uphold the Commissioner. I warned Rhodes of what I had heard, and suggested that if this was not the position he had better resign, which would force Warren to declare openly that Bechuanaland was under martial

law, and that there was no room for anybody else. Upon this Rhodes declared that he would have a clear understanding with Warren. The next day he informed me that Warren had apologized, but with the proviso that he still wished to propitiate MacKenzie. 'Nevertheless,' Rhodes said, 'Warren has promised to be reasonable.'

Sir Charles and his force would have been very annoyed at being recalled at this stage. Conciliation was not a policy they supported. They were spoiling for a fight, and not because they were interested in the rights and wrongs of Bechuanaland, but because the British Army was still smarting at the recollection of Majuba. I, on the contrary, both in sentiment and duty was attached to the policy of the Cape Government, and so my place at the mess table became untenable. I accordingly asked Rhodes to wire in code to the High Commissioner to ask him to recall me to my Government post. When I left I remarked to Rhodes that I would give him three days in which to find that he had to follow my example.

I rode about fifty miles on the first day of my journey south and in the evening off-saddled at the side of the road. In the night I heard horses travelling rather fast and so I stepped into the road. I found Rhodes, with his servant and another man. I asked him what had happened, and he answered: 'You were quite right, Thompson. Warren and I had a devil of a row, and he actually tried to revoke the Stellaland agreement. He has also decided to reinstate MacKenzie, and has brought him up. So I told him that I was going to tell the Government in London that there was now no need for the expedition, and that the Goshen Republic has already ceased to exist.'

Sir Charles Warren continued his expedition towards Rooi Grond, but on arriving there found that the Boers had scurried back to the Transvaal, where many of them later received Government appointments. The British Government then ordered the troops back, and the whole area was proclaimed British Bechuanaland up to Ramathlabama. So the 'Wasp's Waist', the narrow trade route to the north, was secured for British influence.

Extract from speech made by Cecil Rhodes at Claremont in 1898. "Some of them would remember the trouble in years past with Bechuanaland when Kruger desired to shut the Colony off so as to have the centre of Africa. Well with the help of their present member (Mr J. P. Thompson) who devoted his ability and determination, the British Authorities were successful."

Chapter IV

THE COMPOUND SYSTEM AT DE BEERS

I lived on quietly in charge of the Native Reserves in Griqualand West until 1886, when Rhodes asked me to leave the Civil Service and undertake the reorganization of the native compounds in Kimberley, where things were in a chaotic state. I had, at that time, been eight years in the Civil Service as Supervisor and Protector of Natives, and to resign would entail the sacrifice of all claims to pension. I did not long hesitate however and, taking a bold step, accepted the offer of the De Beers Company.

All the world knows that the illicit buying of diamonds was carried on in Kimberley during its earlier years to the value of millions of pounds. Many men who had come from Europe penniless had acquired large fortunes through this traffic, which had attained such dimensions as to threaten the whole diamond industry with ruin. The diamond mining companies were then more or less insolvent. Stones that should have been sold and the proceeds credited to the mines, were stolen by native labourers, who sold them to the I.D.B. gentry. To obviate this it was necessary to devise some means of preventing the native mine labourers from stealing the diamonds. Rhodes, who at this time was turning his mind to the amalgamation of all the diamond mines, often came out to shoot with me at Cornforth Hill, sometimes staying for several days at a time. He often discussed these difficulties with me. The one hopeful factor in the situation was that the chiefs of the tribes from which most of the labourers were recruited were anxious to prevent the natives from wasting their earnings. My idea was completely to isolate the natives in their compounds during their period of employment, and thus stop the leakage of diamonds while at the same time benefiting the natives in their health and pocket. The results could not fail to bring great advantages to the chiefs and to the natives themselves.

My first step was to make arrangements with the chiefs in Basutoland, Bechuanaland and the Transvaal for a continuous supply of labour. When this was done I set to work to design and superintend the building of the compound. Accommodation for five thousand natives had to be provided, and the area required

was about twenty-five acres. Round the whole area I built a wall twelve feet high. Within this enclosure the several stores were placed, such as bakers, butchers and grocers. There was also a dispensary and hospital, and a swimming bath. My plan was that the natives should be locked up within the enclosure for three months, and have access to the mine only through a covered way and down an inclined shaft to the workings, some five hundred feet below the surface.

My first difficulty was to persuade the natives to consent to be locked up. I encountered strenuous opposition from the small shopkeepers in the mining areas, and from canteen keepers in particular, who had hitherto reaped a rich harvest every Saturday night. The opposition of merchants was withdrawn when the Company undertook that all supplies should be bought locally; that there should be no cutting of prices, and that only necessaries should be stocked. I also encountered much opposition from the 'smart' native, who acted as an intermediary between the mine labourers and the I.D.B. gentlemen. This was the most formidable opposition, as these natives had considerable influence over men of their own colour, and were determined to prevent labourers from entering into such an engagement as I proposed. In due course, however, I had my way, and was able to notify the Directors of De Beers that on the following Monday I intended to shut the gates. This I did; the closed compound system was thus brought into operation, and the main gates have been opened only once since then.

On the first day the three thousand natives struck work and refused to be locked up. I had told the Directors that they must expect the work to be at a standstill for a few days, but I believed everything would turn out all right, as I had hundreds of natives coming in from the chiefs to take the places of any who went on strike. I had made it a condition of my service that I should have absolute control of the compound; and a further stipulation was that no intoxicating drink of any description should be allowed within the walls, for either black or white. In this determination Rhodes backed me up to the fullest extent, stinting no expense or support. That we were right in this decision is illustrated by a very unpleasant incident. During Rhodes's absence, an acting Director ordered a lash of brandy to be sent to the compound. I smashed the thing up and allowed the liquor to run into the ground. I was immediately requested to hand in my resignation. I set out at once for Barkly West and another lot of brandy was sent in, with the result that the natives broke out of the gate. Chaos

ensued, and urgent messengers arrived at Barkly West to beg me to return at once. I did so, and managed to restore order. At the first board meeting after Rhodes returned he asked the reason for the drop in production. The Directors at first tried to put the blame on to me, but it was not long before Rhodes understood the true facts of the case.

On the Saturday after the new compound system had been started hundreds of natives, finding that the Company was determined not to yield, began to resume work. I sent a request to the Resident Magistrate that officials should be sent to issue to the natives, in the form of tickets, the terms of the contract under which the natives worked. These terms included free admission to hospital, for which the Company paid a tax of two shillings for each native per mensem. On the following Monday, just eight days after closing the gates, I was able to send down one thousand five hundred men to the works, and from that day to this there has never been a strike.

I remained in charge of the compound only long enough to assure myself that the system was soundly established. The administration and excellent management over many years have been the work of others.

When the natives were safe within the compound walls, the next thing to consider was how to secure the diamonds that had hitherto fallen into the hands of the I.D.B. practitioners. Before closing the gates I had engaged as overseers white men of unquestionable character who possessed some knowledge of native languages and customs. A considerable number was required. I had to deal with thirty thousand natives in a single year. As a rule one overseer in a mine was placed over twenty natives. He had to stand by and watch that no diamonds were picked up, but notwithstanding this supervision wily natives would occasionally succeed in secreting stones. Small diamonds were often swallowed, but could be recovered in a few days. Large stones were thrust up nostrils, or buried in ears, or plaited in woolly locks. Indeed, I have known men to make a wound in the arm or leg with a knife to conceal a diamond.

Before the closed compound system was instituted it had been the custom of labourers at the end of the day to go to their huts, situated about the mining camp. The 'smart' native then appeared on the scene. He soon found the man who had a diamond, and came to an understanding with him. He then met the professional I.D.B., and thus a diamond worth perhaps £50 was sold for a couple of pounds to the European illicit buyer, who in turn sent

it to London to be sold in Hatton Garden, where dealing in diamonds was unrestricted. The gem would finally adorn the bosom of some fair lady.

Stringent laws for stamping out the traffic had been made from time to time, but Europeans and natives had their own ingenious methods of concealing the stones and getting them out of the country. Many of their dodges were skilful. An illicit dealer would address a novel, say, to his mother in England. The parcel would be neatly tied with the ends exposed, as required by the postal regulations, and marked 'per book post'. It certainly seemed nothing more than an ordianry book, but in reality was a parcel of diamonds, for in the centre of the volume holes had been cut through the pages in which to place diamonds carefully wrapped in cotton wool. Gentlemen in hunting jackets, passing themselves off as sportsmen returned from a hunting expedition, loaded the barrels of their guns with diamonds. They put a cork in the breech, pushing it up a few inches, put in a glittering charge at the other end, and rammed a second cork by way of wadding down the muzzle. Women sometimes returned to England with a parcel of diamonds in their dress improvers. Native women taking washing down to the Modder River concealed diamonds in the clothes.

The authorities placed at the ports detectives and women searchers, and arrests were frequently made. The stealing was not confined to any particular class. One can understand the case of the untaught, weak native who was tempted by a price beyond his powers of resistance, but when apparently well-bred Europeans resorted to this means of robbery it was not to be wondered at that their example produced the most pernicious effects.

To prevent parcels of diamonds from being thrown over the walls at night we covered the whole area with wire netting. Before we did this there could sometimes be heard a sound like a stone falling outside the walls, but it was probably a parcel of diamonds that by arrangement had been thrown to someone outside by a native within. Instances occurred where diamonds worth £1000, packed in a jam tin, were thrown out of a compound in this way.

To obviate the smuggling of diamonds by time-expired natives, I introduced what was known as the solitary cell system. The cells are buildings with concrete floors and walls, and lighted by electricity. The natives about to be discharged were first made to undress, and then bathed. They then received blankets, and large leather gloves were locked on their hands. In these cells the natives were detained, with suitable precautions, for five days. On discharge from the compound the natives were handed to one

of the Company's Protectors of Natives, who escorted them out of the town and saw them safely off to their homes with their earnings intact. Unfortunately this arrangement has since been discontinued. The natives later were turned loose at the compound gates, and many fell an easy prey to the human vampires lying in wait for them. The best recruiting agents for the mines were natives who came home with a good sum. They had few facilities for spending money in the compound, and they got rewards for finding and handing in diamonds. I have known natives to leave the Company's works with £100. Had these men been discharged at the gates, many would have found themselves in goal next morning and all their wages stolen.

Before the institution of this closed compound system little or no dividends were paid by the diamond mining companies. De Beers' £10 shares could be bought for £1 10s. to £3. The effect of the compound system is most easily stated in the fact that in 1896 the Company paid a dividend of thirty per cent, and forty per cent in 1897, on its capital of £3,500,000. In 1897 the shares were standing at £55. Today, in 1920, the De Beers Company is paying one hundred and twenty percent, free of income-tax. These figures reveal the value of the diamonds that were stolen. In the first year under the new system £125,000 worth of diamonds was recovered in ten months. Rhodes, in speech a few years later, said the system was as near perfection as was humanly possible. Before its institution the Company got only about thirty per cent of its finds, and after its institution, at the date Rhodes spoke, ninety-five per cent. I.D.B., however, has never been entirely suppressed.

Chapter V

GREETING TO LOBENGULA

C. D. RUDD, at the time I was establishing the new compound system in Kimberley, was interesting himself in Johannesburg and building up the Consolidated Gold Fields of South Africa, a corporation representing his own and Rhodes's interests on the Witwatersrand. I left De Beers with the intention of taking a rest and devoting myself to study. I carried out this intention, and have always looked back on the interlude with pleasure. It was at this time that I received the following letter from Rudd:

Luipaardsvlei
7th May, '88.

P. O. Box 67,
Johannesburg.
Z. A. R.

'My dear Thompson,

'What are you doing with yourself and where are you? Your brother told me some time ago that he expected you here, and again I heard that you had gone to Kuruman.

'What I want to know is—are you likely to be "on" for a trip round the various Transvaal Gold Fields about August and September next. I am going in the interests of my company and there is no one I would sooner have with me than yourself if you can see your way.

'Frank[1] has gone off to Barberton and Zoutpansberg for a couple of months. I expect to leave here about 10th June for Capetown. Send me a line or wire here before that.

'Yours very truly,
'C. D. Rudd.'

Our tour in the Transvaal proved most enjoyable. I had been over the country years before, in the days of the early gold discoveries, and I was amazed at the progress since then. But I was

[1] Frank Rudd, C. D. Rudd's son.

fated never to have anything to do with gold mining, save as an occasional investor or speculator. As I shall relate, I very nearly went to Johannesburg after the Jameson Raid to take the place of Frank Rhodes, but much was to happen before that evil time.

One morning in the early part of 1888 I was sent for by the Chief Justice of Cape Colony, Sir Henry de Villiers, and the Attorney General, Sir Thomas Upington, who together induced me to go back to the Civil Service; this time as Protector of Natives and Government Supervisor of all compounds in the mining areas. I was given an assessor's seat with the magistrate in native trials, and could demand a new trial when I judged it necessary. I mention this because I have gathered from a book[1] that when I went to Matebililand with Rudd I was a digger. I have no objection to being numbered among the diggers, and very much wish I had been a successful one, but as a fact I was otherwise employed. Apparently Sir Henry de Villiers, one of the greatest jurists the Empire has produced, and Sir Thomas Upington, that brilliant figure in Cape history, knew me better than these later authorities on my place and times.

I had been at my new work for only a few days when Rhodes returned from England. At that time I was living at Rondebosch, near Capetown, and was at home when I received a telegram from Rhodes asking me to meet him in the Houses of Parliament that evening. At this meeting began the history of the Chartered Company.

On meeting him his first words were, 'Now for our daydreams of securing the territory up to the Zambesi for the British nation.' I informed him that I had only just gone back to the Civil Service, and at the request of men I should be very sorry to disappoint. Without saying more he sent a message into the House asking Sir Thomas Upington to come out. He came at once, and Rhodes told him that he would like me to have three months' leave as he wished me to carry out most important work. The Minister in charge of native affairs, Sir Jacobus de Wet, was consulted, and I obtained the leave.

Rhodes, like many really great men, despised wealth in itself. He cared about as much for money, so far as avarice went, as a monkey cares for a diamond necklace. He was interested first and last and all the time in his political plans, and money was merely a means to an end. His aims in Matebililand were purely political, but he required money for their fulfilment. The Con-

[1] The reference is to *The Making of Rhodesia* by Marshall Hole.

solidated Gold Fields corporation was his own creation, but he needed the backing of De Beers as well and at that time the Company was controlled by Beit and Barney Barnato. As Barnato's holding was valued at more than a million sterling Rhodes asked him for monetary support. Barnato replied, 'Your sphere of British influence does not appeal to me. You, Rhodes, want Empires, I want money—money counted in millions.' It was only then that Rhodes decided that the acquisition of mineral rights must be the basis of the opening of the north.

Rhodes unfolded to me his scheme for carrying out this aim. His plan, in brief, was that Rudd and I should go to Bulawayo, where we should try to obtain from Lobengula, King of the Matebili, the sole concession for mining minerals in that country.

My first reply to Rhodes's suggestion that I should undertake this venturesome task was: 'I must ask my wife'; a somewhat weak way of saying, 'I must think it over.' Rhodes without more ado pulled a letter from his pocket. 'I knew you would say that,' he said; 'here is her written consent. I got it half an hour ago.'

Rudd, who in this venture was to represent the Consolidated Gold Fields, had already seen her and persuaded her to write this letter.

A syndicate was accordingly formed consisting of Rhodes, Rudd and myself, and the necessary agreement was made between us to govern our shares. We put up only the capital we considered necessary for obtaining a concession and proving that the scheme was practicable, for until this was done the mining corporations were not prepared to sanction the initial costs of the venture. If we succeeded in obtaining the concession from Lobengula it would be the sole property of the syndicate, and this syndicate consisted of us three. Rudd was a rich man, and Rhodes a millionaire. To contribute my share I had to get an overdraft from the Cape of Good Hope Bank. Rudd was my guarantor. The initial cost of the venture was £37,000. Thus later, when the Concession had led to the Charter and Rhodes had brought in the Rothschilds, the Gold Fields, Wernher, Beit and others, my position among these magnates was very weak. It might easily have been exploited against me had not Rudd guarded my interests.

Rochfort Maguire joined Rudd and myself on the expedition at Rhodes's request to both of us. It was clearly understood that he was not in any official sense a member of the expedition. He had, of course, no share in the syndicate. He had only recently arrived in South Africa, travelling in the same ship as Rhodes,

and he came with us to Matebililand, so far as I ever knew, for want of something better to do. He was a lawyer by profession and put the Concession into legal form at Bulawayo, but Rudd's capacities would have been equal to the occasion. Maguire was a man of charm and ability and I always liked him; although, as I shall relate, his distaste for life in the wilds caused me much trouble.

The day after my meeting with Rhodes I set out alone for Kimberley, and my first work there was to purchase two teams of good mules, two waggons and a supply of stores sufficient for three months. Two days afterwards Rudd joined me, and on August 15th, 1888, with Rhodes, Currey and a few others to see us off, we started. The people in Kimberley were most inquisitive about whither we were bound, but I believe that not a soul there guessed our destination. I told everybody that we were going to shoot big game. We had with us Rudd's young son, Frank, and as attendants two men named Dreyer and Denny.

I had agreed to pilot the party as far as Shoshong, Khama's town, about eighteen degrees south latitude, and undertook all the responsibilities of the road up to that point. We reached Shoshong after twenty-two days, travelling under peculiar and at times ludicrous difficulties: thirst, mules dying, waggons breaking down, and so forth. At Khama's town we encountered our first check, for complications had arisen between the Chief Khama and the Transvaal authorities following the death of Mr. Grobler, a Republican agent at Bulawayo, who had been attacked by Khama's people when passing through their territory and mortally wounded.

The chief was away when we arrived, but on leaving Shoshong he had issued orders that in his absence no white man was to be allowed to travel through the land towards the north, and no grain was to be sold by the natives. Among natives in troublous times little or no attention can be paid to sowing and reaping corn, and hence this latter order by Khama. It placed us in an awkward fix, as we had twenty mules and horses to feed. I decided to call on the resident missionary, Mr. Hepburn. On arriving at the house, grimy and travel-stained, I found only Mrs. Hepburn at home. I addressed her by name and she asked me who I was. I replied that I was the son of Mr. Francis Thompson, of Barkly West, and she then remembered me as a lad. We were invited into the house and treated with the warmest hospitality. I explained the difficulty we were in, and told her that we were on a mission to Lobengula's country.

On our leaving Capetown the High Commissioner had given to Rhodes a letter, bearing the Queen's stamp, and contained in an envelope eighteen inches by twelve. It was a most formidable-looking letter, addressed in the best official style:

O.H.M.S.
To King Lobengula,
King of the Amandabili.

To
King Lobengula,
King of the Amandabili.

'I beg to introduce to you Messrs. Rudd and Thompson, two highly respectable gentlemen who are visitng your country.

'HERCULES ROBINSON,
High Commissioner, etc.'

I showed the letter to Mrs. Hepburn, closed as it was, and she at once told the chief in charge that we should be allowed to pass as we were bearing a letter from the Queen. Thus, thanks to Mrs. Hepburn's kindness, we obtained a supply of corn and went on our journey. I mentioned to Rudd that the treatment we had received would have an excellent moral effect on the natives, and that I felt certain that we would succeed in our mission. To this he replied, 'You are a sanguine man, and always up in the stirrups.'

That missionaries had reason to scrutinize casual white callers, and that natives watched the effect such callers produced, was illustrated by an event a few years previously when a white trader visited a missionary's house at Morokwen and found the missionary's wife alone, her husband being away on itinerant work. The ruffian attempted to assault her, but she escaped and took refuge with the natives. When her husband returned she complained to him and he reported the matter to the chief, who after investigation sentenced the trader to be flogged. It so happened that the trader's waggon was loaded with gunpowder. He returned to it after being sentenced and declared that no native chief should flog him. The chief, with his councillors and eighty of his followers and the missionary, then came to the waggon. The trader had his son with him, a lad of twelve, and tried to get the boy to run off, but he clung to the wheel and refused to budge. As the chief and party arrived the man got into the waggon,

quickly opened a keg of powder and dropped a live coal into it. Trader, chief, missionary, councillors and followers were in an instant sent to eternity; but the lad, still clinging to the wheel, was blown to a distance and escaped with a few bruises.

It is, I am sorry to say, the habit of some to decry mission work, but I affirm that had it not been for the penetration of the first adventurous missionairies into the dark corners of Africa there would have been but little country opened up. Consider what they did.

A missionary with his young wife set out in a waggon with supplies for, say, three years. They penetrated where no white people had been, and by dint of patience, longsuffering, and persuasion obtained permission to build a hut. They pointed out to the chiefs that they were not traders, nor did they ask for aught. Gradually they impressed the natives with their honesty of purpose. Then they were allowed to make bricks for a house, plant trees, and make themselves as comfortable as circumstances would permit. Their pay, as a rule, was very poor; often not more than £100 or £150 per annum. About a year after this some enterprising Englishman would think a trading trip to that part would be a good thing. He would at once load up about £1000 worth of Manchester and Birmingham goods, and set off on what was then considered a dangerous trip. His only question along the road would be, 'Where does the white teacher reside?' Eventually he would find him, and at once would ask for his help with the chief, from whom he would seek permission to sell his wares. In exchange for these goods he would take ivory, skins, feathers, cattle, sheep or goats. Ultimately he would be allowed to open a store, and the mission would then be called a trading station. He would probably do so well that at last he would become a direct importer, sending to Manchester and Birmingham for even larger consignments.

In the meantime the missionary would pursue the even tenor of his way, until a second and third trader arrived. Then, if the country was a good one, a small township might be laid out. Eventually the chief would be induced to ask for annexation to the Crown. The missionary would still go on as before; the only difference being that what he could formerly buy for five pounds would probably now cost him double. If he attempted to buy a sheep with anything but hard cash he would at once be blackguarded, for these traders would be the first to cry out, and probably report him or write him down in the newspapers.

No; the pioneers of the British Empire were the missionaries,

for beyond controversy they were the first to open up several countries which eventually became part of that Empire of which we are so proud. I have lived all my life among them in Africa, and I can challenge anyone to say that he ever knew a missionary who tried to make anything for himself out of his work. There are few names more worthy of remembrance than those of Helm, Carnegie, Rees and Elliot, and theirs should surely not be forgotten, with others, in the history of Rhodesia.

After seven days of hard and difficult travelling we arrived at Tati, now Francis Town, on the southern border of Lobengula's country. Here we found that orders had been given that no white man was to cross the boundary without Lobengula's consent. The king's capital was about a hundred and twenty-five miles distant, and Rudd decided, against my advice, to write a letter to him and send it on by messenger. In this letter he stated that we were not 'needy adventurers', nor had we come to the country to beg from the king, or to ask anything of him. Its terms implied, I thought, that the few whites who happened to be with the king were needy adventurers. I wish particularly to direct attention to these words 'needy adventurers', for they had a very ill effect on our proceedings.

I suggested that we should boldly break the law and follow up our messenger a day or two after he had set out. If the worst came to the worst we could plead ignorance, or explain that we had taken it for granted that no objection would be made to our entering the country as we carried a letter to Lobengula from the Queen. We accordingly continued the journey. Our first accident was running against a stump of a tree. The axle of one of the waggons was completely bent up, but thanks to my varied experience in life I was able to straighten and adjust it. This task occupied me the whole day, but as men, horses and mules were beginning to show signs of thirst, we kept on our way throughout the night.

Early the next morning we reached a ravine, a very dangerous place to cross, and here we had another accident. The waggon I had previously repaired capsized, breaking the pole and again bending the axle. The metal of the axle, owing to lack of water to temper it, had become soft. We decided that Rudd should drive the mules to a spot where we heard water was to be found, while I again tackled the repairing of the vehicle.

Maguire, up to this time, had played the part of onlooker very well. I now asked him to prepare breakfast. The meal was to consist of salmon curried, and his first question was how to open

the tin. I handed him a strong pocket-knife, and explained how to use it, but he thrust the blade deeply into his thumb-nail instead of into the tin. The accident terminated his training as a chef.

By the time I had repaired the waggon Rudd had returned with the mules, having succeeded in finding water some miles away. We at once inspanned and continued our journey. We had struggled on for another two days, when the right hind wheel of the other waggon came to grief. I managed to tie this up with stout pieces of raw hide, an article, I may observe, that no traveller in South Africa should be without. There is a saying that if all the lengths of raw hide (or voorslag, as it is called) were to be untied in Africa, the country would fall to pieces.

On the following day we arrived at Kumalo. The natives there, and all along our road, had taken it for granted that we had obtained permission from the king to enter his domain, and so did not venture to stop us. Here at Kumalo we met our messenger on his way back. He was greatly surprised to meet us, for the king's reply was that we were to come no further than Tati, and at once go back to our own country.

We remained for the night at Kumalo among the savages while our messenger returned to the king, telling him how far we had come and repeating our first request. To this the king replied that it was now useless to ask his permission to come in, as we were already in. He expressed a wish that we should come to him. Accordingly we started for his kraal, which we reached at about five o'clock in the evening. During the exchange of messages, however, the 'Needy Adventurers' had been called together, and the letter from Rudd was handed to them to read and translate for the king. In the light of the allusion to them it contained, there need be no surprise that the first message we received from the king was an order to return whence we came.

Among the white men we found at Bulawayo were many who had gone there years before 'for the good of their country', and had sadly degenerated in their ideas and habits. They had crept into the place as a haven of refuge, and some, indeed, were escaped criminals. There was nothing they would not descend to. They lived on the bounty of the king, and acted in any capacity he desired. I would call them Lobengula's Foreign Legion. Naturally they feared that any concession granted to us would mean the advent of law and order, when they might be called upon to answer for their past. Another obstacle lay in representatives of powerful interests in Germany and other countries who were

on the qui vive to prevent the granting of a concession that would virtually close the door to any but British interests. The opposition of these men, and the suspicious nature of the natives, were the chief difficulties we had to contend with. There were also other legitimate concession hunters, who had eventually to be bought out in the final settlement. All these influences combined at first in antagonism to our party.

On the evening we arrived we went to greet His Majesty. The interview was necessarily short as the law among the Matebili was that no native—man, woman or child—should be out after dark, as only wolves and witches were then supposed to be abroad. So strict was this law that anyone discovered prowling near a village after dark could be killed at sight without question.

We found Lobengula to be just such a figure as I had expected. A man of about twenty stone, tall, stout, well built, looking every inch a king. His palace consisted of a pole stockade with about a dozen huts for the queens who were with him at the time. He had two hundred wives in all. Within the enclosure was a private sanctum constructed of poles known as the 'Buck Kraal', which accommodated at night about five hundred goats. It was in this place that all the plans were concocted for smelling out and killing people, when the sacrifices had to be made for rain. The rain maker was the king.

Lobengula was seated on a block of wood, surrounded on all sides by goats and dogs. We had agreed that we should greet the king as an ordinary gentleman, and that by adhering to this line of conduct we could not go far wrong. We had been told that we should have to approach him by crawling on our hands and knees, and remain in a recumbent position while in his presence. This was the custom, and the whites who had thrown in their lot with the natives were wont to observe it. We decided, however, to walk boldly up to him in the ordinary fashion, and this we did, to the evident surprise of his entourage.

He kept us waiting for some time. Then he enquired who we were, and put many commonplace questions which we answered. We handed him a bag containing a hundred sovereigns by way of a greeting gift. We were then told to return to our camp and sleep nicely, a piece of advice which we lost no time in following.

Chapter VI

THE MATABILI AND THEIR WAYS

'MZILIGAZI, *the Path of Blood*, one of the chief Indunas of the Zulu king Chaka, but himself of the Royal Blood of the family of Kumalo, having fallen into disfavour with his master, determined to set up a kingdom for himself. In 1822 he fled from what is now northern Natal with a following of nine hundred pure-bred Zulus. After sweeping all before him on the plains we call the Orange Free State and the Transvaal, eventually he collided with the Boer Trekkers, and they put an end to his career in those parts. He had been there about 20 years when they chased him over the Magaliesberg. He took a number of natives from the Ikalafein, and followed the course of the Marico River, crossing at its junction with the Notawani. He fought his way north through what is now Bechuanaland, and pressing northward crossed the Mcloutzi and Tati[1] rivers.

He took captive many thousands of young Bechuana of both sexes. He incorporated them into his nation, marking each with the distinctive hole in the ear, the Zulu mark. He finally established himself at Inyati, forty miles north of the present Bulawayo, and from there he moved again to where the mission station of Hope Fountain afterwards stood, near the Criterion Mine. This is where he died. He was buried sixteen miles to the east of where Rhodes lies today, up in the highest point of the Motopos. It was from this, and from the interest he always took in the tombs of the Pharaohs, that Rhodes conceived the idea of being buried in these mountains —the successor of 'Mziligazi, the Lion of the North.

At or near 'Mziligazi's grave lived the extraordinary man or god known as Molimo. Although never to be approached or spoken to face to face, he was always consulted when any calamity befell the Matebili[2] nation.

When 'Mziligazi died he left eighty thousand subjects, including twenty-five thousand drilled and disciplined warriors. Every boy from the age of twelve had his shield and assegai. The nation at

[1] Tati—wonderful view.

[2] Matebili—a Sechuana word derived from 'tebe', a shield, meaning 'the people who fight with a shield'. The word is not Zulu, and the correct spelling is Amatebili.

this time was divided into three classes or sections. First there were the 'Mbizo or Royalists, survivors of 'Mziligazi's original pure-bred Zulus and their descendants. Strange to say, the Zulu had allowed the wives to follow their husbands into Matebililand. The second section was the Abendla, descendants of the incorporated tribes, and by now partly of Zulu blood. A man of the 'Mbizo might take a wife from the ranks of the Abendla, but a pure-bred woman might on no account marry into that section. The third section was known as the Makalaka, who occupied the 'Mpandweni country north of Francis Town.

In time the Abendla grew in numbers, had their appointed chiefs, and became a power which even 'Mziligazi dared not ignore. Collectively they were part of the Matebili nation, and to all intents and purposes identified with it, but there was this distinction—the Royalists always asserted their superiority, while descendants of the mixed people refused to acknowledge that they were in any way inferior.

Kulumani was the eldest son of the Royal House. His name was a corruption of the word Kuruman, the name of Robert Moffat's mission station, and he was so called because of 'Mziligazi's friendship with the missionary. When a boy, Kulumani fled at the instigation of his mother, who feared he might be put to death by the followers of his younger brother, Lobengula. He fled to Zululand to his grandfather's people. Upon the king's death the Royalists, the pure-bred Zulus, insisted upon sending an expedition to find Kulumani and bring him back to be crowned. In the meantime the country was ruled by the hereditary regent, 'Mthlabi. This regent, accompanied by the chief Induna Lotjie, made his way into Natal. *En route* they called upon Paul Kruger at Pretoria, who directed them on their journey.

Kulumani was eventually traced to the house of one of the elder Shepstones. He refused to return ot Matebililand, fearing treachery. The expedition returned and reported, but was again sent to try to persuade him to come back. They met with no better success. Upon their return the Royalists wished them to try again, but the opposition party, who favoured Lobengula,cried aloud: 'Why bring him back? Will a baboon reared in the domesticity of the white man ever be rid of the smell of the white man?'

The nation fell to fighting the matter out. In the battle of Zwangendaba, in 1878, in which thousands were killed, the Royalists were defeated. Lobengula was then crowned king, and the Royalists were the first to konza (salute) him. From then on they served him faithfully.

Lobengula was of pure Zulu blood, and in his heart of hearts was favourably disposed to the Royalists. In spite of his favour and protection, however, all in turn were gradually 'smelled out' by the witch doctors and put to death upon some pretext or other. Their only crime was their aristocratic breeding and bearing. On their death all their followers and relations went under.

There was no individual ownership of anything in Matebililand. All was the king's. Beast, goat or sheep, land, ivory, gold-dust or game were all the sole property of the king; and with resignation every man went to his execution with the words, 'I am the king's'.

Despotism of the worst kind prevailed. When I was there it was a common thing for Lobengula to order an entire village to be wiped out. It was always his policy, following his father's method, to play off one party against another. For a season the democrats would be the attendants at the court, and through the witch doctors would be used to exterminate a kraal of Royalists. In turn the Royalists would find favour at court, and they would not be slow to advise the king to exterminate some of the other political party. Thus he divided and ruled. Twenty Indunas were chosen each year to attend the king.

In ancient Rome a citizen who became too powerful or fell into disfavour was ordered to open his veins in a warm bath. The Matebili executioners 'opened an Induna's veins' with a tap from a knob-kerrie at the back of the head. The victim's wife and children, and all his relatives within reach, were killed and their goods confiscated. They had become Mtagati (witches and wizards) wishing ill against the king. I have passed over the bodies of men and women in their last agony. I have seen a child aged only a few days lying near its murdered mother, like a new-born kitten, dying by inches. One dare say nothing, nor draw the attention of any of the natives to this horror. Nor would one have been allowed to move the dying child towards its mother. Had one done so one would have probably been accused of being a wizard.

When I was in Matebililand I saw many instances of ferocity and the most callous cruelty; a state of affairs, indeed, that common humanity demanded should be brought to an end. The following instances are taken from the diary I wrote at Bulawayo.[1]

Early one afternoon at the Great Place in front of the king's house there were about three hundred natives all drunk on Kaffir

[1] Other extracts from Thompson's diary are given in Appendix F.

beer. I had some trouble to get through the crowd. I got into the king's enclosure, and there I saw the most awful spectacle I have seen in my life. I saw crawling on his hands and knees a native, about forty years old, with great lumps of flesh hanging from his face; his nose over his mouth, the ears both suspended by a thread of flesh. Just as I got near I saw a man with a pole hit the crawling man in the small of the back, trying to kill the unfortunate brute. This was all in front of the king. The crime the man had committed was that, while under the influence of liquor, he had drunk some of the king's beer. The king ordered his nose, ears and lips, and the skin of his forehead, to be cut off.

The next day I heard that this unfortunate wretch was still alive. It was awful to see how the king enjoyed the spectacle. He was a savage in the fullest sense of the word.

Slaves were frequently brought in from the Moshokolombie country. Two girls aged twelve and fourteen were at the king's kraal and I thought (for one dare not say anything), how gentle although downhearted they looked among the other slaves. The poor creatures took it into their heads to make a bolt for it and try to get home. Young warriors, about twenty years old, were sent after them, and they caught them near Imshanyani almost dead from hunger. They were brought back and fed for a day, and then thrashed by the 'dogs'—twenty boys aged from twelve to eighteen years. The king handed these two girls over to the boys to thrash with big sjamboks. I draw a veil over the rest. They were just alive when I saw them.

A native named Kumalo, whom I knew well, was sentenced to be stoned to death for witchcraft. He had been in the habit of coming to our camp almost every day, as a good many others did. I heard of the sentence, and then saw fifty natives standing in the distance. Not five minutes afterwards I saw Kumalo bolting along the veld with forty boys aged from twelve to seventeen after him, stoning the unfortunate man. They followed him out of sight, and what happened to him may be left to the imagination. There was a hill near by, the scene of all these killings. It would have been madness to interfere, much as one would have liked to save him. This was but one instance. Hundreds of men were killed in this and other ways. The king suffered from gout, and his doctors put it into his head that the only way to be cured was to 'smell out' natives and kill them. The king, unfortunately, had attacks of gout frequently.

At the end of March each year ten thousand men were sent out to destroy and kill all smaller nations on the Zambesi. On

these occasions the most awful barbarity was perpetrated. These men, or warriors as they were called, when they reached a town killed all but the children and old women. The old women had to carry all the spoil taken, and when they neared the capital they were tied up to a tree and burned alive. The warriors finished the journey with the little children, who were sold and distributed.

Under this pall of black barbarism there were some curious specimens of white men. Down on the Lebombo there were ten, all runaways, murderers and worse. They made a living by buying slave girls, generally twenty years old, for fifty cotton blankets each. They then took the girls to the borders and sold them to other white scoundrels.

A specimen of another type possessed an income of £1500 a year, and had taken it into his head to live away from all white faces. He had a harem. He hated his own race so much that if any white man happened to come near his house he bolted into the bush. The poor brute, from what I could gather, had been crossed in love and regarded his mode of life as a vengeance.

A son of another notorious character once called on me at my camp. His father had built two houses at —— and furnished them in the European manner. He had two white women as wives, bot at one time of their lives presentable women, and every year each had a child. He left a large double family and was immensely rich in cattle and other resources. This happened a long time before I went to Matebililand, but in 1888 his two wives lived together as widows and the children were all over the place; some with black angels, some with none, and some with white.

One night an American named Thomas O'Connor was picked up among the hills a hundred miles from Bulawayo. He had been wandering about and lost himself near Barberton. He lived upon what he could beg from natives, most of whom had never seen a white man before. They behaved admirably to him. They made him a prisoner and brought him up to the king, who asked the white men to take charge of him. He looked more like a monkey than a man, but was quite right in his mind. He simply lost himself, and by eating roots managed to pull through. He came to South Africa from California. The following day he seemed to have completely recovered. It was most remarkable that the natives did not kill him.

Lobengula had many wives. The process of choosing them was very interesting. In a given week before the Saturnalia, the yearly dance of the First Fruits towards the end of January, a number

of mothers were warned that the king required wives. Likely candidates, however, had already been provisionally selected by the proper court officials. To qualify for selection they had to be fine specimens of humanity, young upstanding virgins of about eighteen. They were bathed, and then greased and anointed with what Europeans would call 'stinks', but which they regarded as perfumes. They were then brought by their mothers to appear before the king in his private sanctum.

I was once privileged to be present on one of these occasions. Each of the young maidens, as a rule a dozen or more were chosen at a time, carried a handbroom, a miniature bed-skin, and a round stone with a hole in it used for grinding corn. These represented the woman's qualifications: with her brush she swept the room, with her millstone she ground sprouted corn for beer, and the white miniature bed-skin was an emblem of chastity. They were not robed in silken gowns. They appeared in nature's garb, singing a little lullaby that sounded to me like 'Three Blind Mice'. Seated at the king's feet were a few of his oldest councillors, men versed in all the requirements. One of these men remarked, 'She is all right in the quarters, her build is good, but oh, what a face!' About a girl fatter than the others, fat being the standard of beauty, he said: 'Ah, there is a nice soft one.'

Three or four were finally selected, and the rest were ordered to withdraw and go home to their mothers. The mothers were anything but satisfied.

Mothers of accepted daughters received a number of cattle, their daughters in the meantime being handed over to the hairdresser. Each girl had her head shaved and a little crown of fibre, the size of a penny, was sewn into a tuft of hair left in the centre of the head. She thus became an 'Nkosigazi (big lady). Notice was then given to all the young men of her own age in her own district to rally round her, and they formed a new regiment, probably one thousand strong, of which she was the centre. She was allowed to choose the colour of their fighting shield. She received a thousand heifers, grain for seed, pots for beer and slave girls for her court. With her regiment and retinue she was despatched to the border, two hundred miles away, and there she reigned as a little queen while her warriors were trained. In this way the boys came to know every feature of this part of the boundary, and in time to come, even as very old men, they would be called in to settle boundary disputes.

In the course of time the cattle increased and the granaries filled. In two or three years the young queen would receive orders

to come to the king's court with her regiment. She would be expected to provide food, beer, slaughter bullocks, bring grain and as much herb as is required to feed the court for three days. This included the feeding of the thousand men who lay round the king, outside the Royal Kraal, for his protection. The same procedure was adopted for each queen and thus several regiments might be formed in one year.

Two or three years added to the stature of the young warriors. They were dressed in their full war dress. Some preceded and some followed the queen on her progress to the court. She had up to this time not occupied the king's couch. If she had improved in her general appearance and manner, and if she found favour in his eyes, he might be in the humour to say she should remain at court for a few days.

Outside the enclosure her followers accommodated themselves in improvised huts. Then a new song was written by the song-maker. One of these ran as follows:

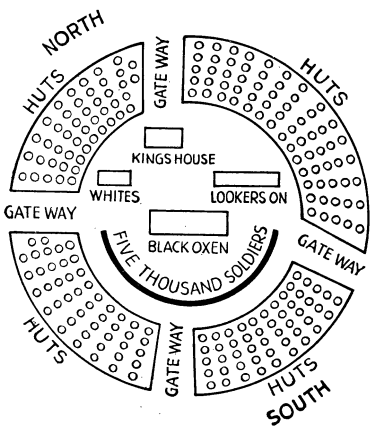
Oh, to think that thou hast found favour with the
Lion of the North, and art to stay at his court!
Oh, that thou mayest indeed delight him
When thou art nestled in the King's arms. And
Then thou wilt ask a boon of him, that
Thy regiment may be chosen as one of the many
To cross the Zambesi, to whet their spears
In the blood of the enemy; returning with slaves and loot.
For thus, and thus alone, can we attain manhood
And the right of marriage—for we too want wives.

For five days the young queen might remain with the king, and then she was given her *congé*. God blessed her if she happened to become the mother of a young Lobengula, for her fortune was then assured. Some queens might bring bullocks and beer and corn, but might themselves have developed or improved so little that after the king's inspection they would be told to retire to their distant homes with no 'God bless you.' I felt sorry for these unfortunate women. The young warriors would rail at them for not having the captivating qualities of the queen preceding them. The king might possibly keep a queen for a month or even longer but this did not deter him from choosing another if he wished.

Unchastity was rare, and severely punished. A girl who had been unfortunate would be taken to the king, hamstrung, and cast outside the village, losing her name and being allowed only between sundown and dark to creep round on her knees to beg

for food. She had always to avoid her own home. A severe penalty could be imposed on anyone who addressed her by name as the daughter of her father or mother. She was known as Usefeba (outcast). If the man was discovered he was brained at once, and possibly his father would be severely punished.

Bulawayo in 1888 was a Matebili town of about ten thousand people. The town itself was built in a circle with a diameter of half a mile, enclosed by a wall or stockade of poles three feet thick. On the inside were ten rows of huts conforming to the circle.



A Sketch of Bulawayo in 1888

The rough sketch is one I drew when I was there to illustrate a description of the greatdance. On this occasion the women and children, and the handful of white onlookers were allowed to stand near the king's house. The black half-moon in the sketch represents the warriors, about five thousand. In the middle are shown fifty sacred black oxen.

This great dance inaugurated thirty days of feasting, during which beer and meat were available *ad libitum*. For this period the king abdicated his office, his government being handed over to three eminent 'smellers out', or witch doctors, named Bosongwane, Nonyno, and Thule. It was their business in this inaugural ceremony to anoint the king, and for this they required fifty pots of medicine.

On the first day of the annual feast thus inaugurated, about two thousand men appeared at six o'clock in the morning with long sticks, the tops made to look like the head of Kaffir corn when it is growing. This was called the corn dance. These two thousand men stood and sang a slow solemn hymn imitating at intervals the winter winds, and then you saw their sticks waving like corn. It was really a grand picture, and I could not imagine anything in nature being better imitated.

For the great dance warriors were dressed in ostrich feathers and otter caps. Their sharpened assegais were burnished like silver. They stood round the half-moon ten deep. They began the dance with a war song, to which they beat time with a heavy

tramp. They never changed their ground but kept a perfect line. The thud of their feet made the earth ring, and they sang at the top of their voices. Then the queens appeared, some dressed beautifully although barbarically in beads and silk sashes of all colours and shades. The beads on each of them must have weighed fifty pounds. They carried long wands, and walked from the king's harem in single file according to their rank and the length of time they had been married. After walking round the circle to curtsey to the regiments the queens joined in the song. This ceremony opened the dance and then the common women, all singing, joined the procession. The men kept their places. This went on for two hours, and then the sacred oxen were turned loose. They bolted for the north gateway, running fast as they had been trained to do. Up and after them went the five thousand warriors. The oxen ran the distance into the veld to which they had been trained, and then returned at full gallop to their places bellowing all the way.

The charge outwards and the return of the oxen lasted about an hour. The women scattered as the oxen returned, and then the warriors came back to their places.

Up to this time the king had not appeared, and silence prevailed while the people awaited him. As he came out onto the verandah of his house a great cheer was raised. The noise was deafening. He came out with his spears and shield and gave threeor four leaps like a madman. When he appeared the queens scattered as if running for their lives. He stayed for two minutes. The singing was resumed for half an hour and then the warriors stood at ease.

Soon after the bravest of the brave were called out. They danced and leapt, describing the brave deeds they had done and boasting of the number of enemies they had killed. This pantomime lasted a long time, and according to their declarations each must have killed twenty or thirty of the enemy.

At four o'clock in the afternoon the king appeared again. He made a rush, and as quick as lightning the half-moon closed round him. They moved back, and he led a procession out on to the veld. He took up his assegai and eager eyes watched which way he would throw it, for from that direction war was to be expected. He came out in 1889 on the south-east side of the stockade, a hint of his aim, and in that direction he threw. Two thousand men then knew they would go that way on a raiding expedition.

They came back, took their places, and the king thanked them. Then he went into his house and the gathering dispersed. Most of the warriors had come from various parts of the country and they returned to their camps outside the town.

Chapter VII

INDABA AT BULAWAYO

WHEN we were in Shoshong Mrs. Hepburn gave me a letter of introduction to Mr. C. D. Helm, senior missionary in Matebililand, who lived twenty miles from Bulawayo. Before leaving the king I informed him that we were going to visit this missionary who, as I suggested to His Majesty, might be questioned about our respectability. Here again my old association with missionaries proved of service, for I need hardly say that when enquiries were made a good account of us was given by Mr. Helm to Lobengula.

Three days having passed, we presented ourselves before the king and I opened our business to him. He listened attentively and showed considerable intelligence. I explained that we were not Boers, and were not seeking for land, but only asked the right to dig the gold of the country. I told him that all eyes were turned to his dominions, which I likened to a dish of milk that was attracting flies. I said that the Boers were evincing signs of pushing their way from the south, alluding at the same time to the death of the Transvaal emissary, Mr. Grobler. I gave him to understand also that the Portuguese were pressing in on the east, or Mashona side, where the vast ocean washed past.

On hearing this the king at once observed: 'You are only a boy. How do you know that there is a sea on the east side? You have never been there?'

He thought that the only way to the east coast was through his country. I replied that I knew by the books of my fathers that the great waters were round there. But in vain did I endeavour to convince him, for he persisted in saying that I must have travelled through his territory if I knew of the Mapunga (rice-eaters, meaning the Portuguese). Our conversation was carried on in Sechuana, a language only he and a half-dozen Matebili understood. Fortunately the white men at Bulawayo did not understand it. Very little headway was made at the interview, but he was much interested. Among other things I described the Zulu War of 1879, and the engagements in which I had taken part in 1878. Until then white men had been regarded by the Matebili more or less as dogs, but the king took an extraordinary

interest in examining the scars of gunshot wounds on my body. I believe he would have preferred to talk of anything rather than discuss giving away the gold concession, a subject he carefully avoided. I as diligently referred to it, with the result that to be rid of us he at last said, 'Well, go and talk to the councillors'.

I asked him when I should be able to do so, and he replied that he would summon them to discuss the matter shortly. With this we were obliged to be content.

Before this interview I had spoken to Lotjie, who occupied among the Matebili a position equivalent to that of Prime Minister, and to Sekombo, the Induna who in 1896 was to meet Rhodes at the Motopos, and put our scheme carefully before them. I promised them gifts if they assisted us.

Rudd and I discussed the feasibility of obtaining a thousand Martini-Henry rifles and ammunition for Lobengula. We felt certain that nothing else would obtain us the concession. We agreed that we should promise these, and in addition a gunboat for the Zambesi. This new temptation was rendered necessary owing to the light estimation in which gold coin was held by natives. Money had no value. We had £10,000 with us in sovereigns, but the natives referred to them as 'lumps of metal' and 'buttons', and said they were fitted for no better use than to make bullets.

When first I went to Matebililand I could buy an ox for three pounds' weight of beads, costing 1s. 6d. a pound. A sheep could be bought for a yard of calico worth sixpence. A sovereign would not buy an egg, but an empty cartridge case would buy two fowls. A cartridge case was worn as the tribal token in the slit made in the ear.

Guns and ammunition, in short, were considered the only things really worth having. This being the case, it will readily be understood how useless it would have been to offer only a monthly payment of so many sovereigns. If we had not obtained guns and ammunition to give as well, all our efforts would have been in vain. The natives had seen the effects of shooting by hunters, and naturally coveted such efficient treasures. When the time came, of course, we made the most of our ability to supply rifles.

Nobody can conceive the weariness of the ensuing days. It was simply a matter of waiting and watching. The native mind moves slowly, and for reasons of his own Lobengula did not wish to be hurried. He was willing enough to meet us, but did not wish to discuss a concession.

We were reduced to spending every day in our little camp,

most of the time playing backgammon or reading. We did not dare to go far afield in case we might be called by Lobengula. Shortly after we arrived the tedium was lifted for a short time by the visit of Sydney Shippard, Administrator of Bechuanaland, who had come to make a full enquiry into the death of Grobler on the border of Khama's territory.

Our anxiety and impatience increased day by day, but at last, at the end of October 1888, a month after we had arrived at the king's kraal, we met one hundred Indunas in an indaba.[1] These Indunas constituted a full council of the Matebili nation. Mr. Helm represented Lobengula, and explained our proposals. The indaba assembled at a spot fifty yards from the king's head-quarters and took place on two consecutive days.

I first addressed the meeting and entered fully into the question. The Indunas sat perfectly quiet and listened intently. They heard from me all about the Boers pressing into the country which I likened to a dish of milk; about the Portuguese encroaching; about the thousand Martini-Henry rifles and hundred thousand ball cartridges; about the gunboat for the Zambesi. They heard all this, but when it came to asking them for the sole right to the gold throughout the whole country, the cry arose from one and all, 'Maai Ba Booa.' This may be translated, 'Mother of Angels, listen, listen.'

By way of explaining the idea of 'sole right' I told them that I was not going to have two bulls in one herd of cows. All discussion with natives on grave matters was in my time carried on more or less in metaphor, a style carrying much weight when skilfully used. On my alluding to bulls on this occasion one Induna observed that I was right, for the bulls would certainly fight instead of looking after the cows. Thereupon another Induna said, 'Yes; I can see he is frightened of other men in the country.'

'He is greedy then,' said a third. At this Samapolane, an Induna who was also to meet Rhodes in the Motopos, rose and said, 'No; we will give you a part of the country.'

This was not what we wanted, but I had created an impression, and my talk about rifles had produced the effect intended. So my reply was to turn to Rudd and say, 'Come, we will go. These people talk only about giving us a place to dig.'

Rudd, speaking for the first time, said, 'All right, let us take a piece'; and then in an aside to me, 'We can gradually ingratiate ourselves with the people.'

[1] Conference on a matter of State: the Zulu equivalent of parliament.

Maguire, also opening his mouth for the first time, seized Rudd by the coat tails and said, 'For heaven's sake, Rudd, sit down and don't interfere with Thompson.'

I jumped up and made it appear that we would not discuss matters further. I said, 'Yes, Indunas, your hearts will break when we have gone. And you will remember the three men who offered you moshoshla (Martini rifles) for the gold you despise in this land.'

The farewell 'Good day to you' was half out of my mouth when Lotjie, the Prime Minister, caught me by the little finger. 'Sit down, Tomoson,' he said; 'I thought you were a man when you began to speak. We as old men know about the Portuguese to the east, and the ocean running past where the sun rises, but truly I see you are only a child.'

Lotjie then went into the king's private enclosure, where he and Lobengula remained in close conference for half an hour. When he came out he called, 'Tomoson, come in here. The king wishes to speak to you alone.'

I stepped inside, and Lotjie asked me to sit down and relate to the king all I had said outside to the Council. This I did, emphasizing what I had said about the sadness of Matebili hearts when we left; and how absurd it was to think we did not mean to do what was right. 'Who gives a man an assegai', I said, 'if he expects to be attached by him afterwords? This was my answer to the fear that in giving the Concession the Matebili would open the door to white aggression, for rifles would then be the best defence they could have. This made an obvious impression on the king, and after pondering it for a few moments he exclaimed, 'Give me the fly-blown paper and I will sign it.'

I then said that according to our customs we three brothers should all be present when the document was signed, as in the event of Rudd, Maguire or myself dying, there would still be one left who would know all about the transaction. He asked, 'Are you brothers?'

I replied, speaking in the usual metaphorical style, 'Yes, there are four of us. The big one (Rhodes) is at home looking after the house, and we three have come to hunt.'

When I uttered these words I did not foresee that I should yet go in fear of my life for calling Maguire my brother.

I strolled out of the king's sanctum, assuming as careless a manner as I could, albeit my heart was beating fast enough from excitement. I said to Rudd and Maguire that they had to follow me at once, as the king wished to sign, and I had asked that it

should be done in their presence. Mr. Helm, who had been concerned in watching the interests of the natives, and ensuring that all we did was fair and above board, accompanied us.

We seated ourselves in a semicircle, with the king in the centre. The Concession was placed before him, and he took the pen in his hand to affix his mark, which was his signature. The place on which he was to make his mark was pointed out, and he made it. As he did so Maguire, in a half-drawling, yawning tone of voice, without the ghost of a smile said to me, 'Thompson, this is the epoch of our lives.'

The many people in South Africa and England who knew Maguire will readily imagine the cold-blooded manner in which he uttered the words. It was, in truth, the epoch of his life.

The king having thus signed the Concession we witnessed it, and the document was handed over. This was done on the 30th October, 1888, and the execution of the whole business from start to finish had occupied us exactly twenty-nine days. I asked Mr. Helm to certify on the back of the Concession that all things had been done in conformity with the customs, laws and usages of the Matebili nation in full Council and after full consideration, and that the Concession had been fairly and honestly obtained.

We at once returned to our camp, and Rudd was of opinion that he should start on the return journey that very day, as the sooner he was out of the country with the signed Concession the better. Not one of the white men at Bulawayo had an inkling of our success, nor did we think fit to enlighten them.[1]

With the signed Concession, £5000 in gold, and the six best mules, Rudd bade us good-bye and set out at four o'clock that afternoon.

It had been agreed that if Rudd and I obtained the Concession, Maguire should stay in the country, but the position was of such a difficult and delicate nature, being one of purely native diplomacy, that I was fearful of leaving him there alone. I accordingly agreed to remain, keeping him with me.

For ten days Rudd got on well enough, and then he lost his road. For a day or two he was without water. So intense did his suffering become that he at last laid himself down to die, having first written a short account of how he had suffered, and where he had hidden the Concession. This letter he fastened to a tree.

The native driver went off with the mules in search of water. During the night Rudd in a delirious state wandered for miles until, attracted by the barking of a dog, he came to a camp of

[1] Appendix D. An extract from Rudd's diary.

Bushmen. These Bushmen in the wet season always fill ostrich egg-shells with rain-water and conceal them in different places. When the hunting season comes round they have this scanty supply of water in case of accidents, but they must be hard pressed before they will open a shell. These men opened a shell and gave the water to Rudd, and later took him to Maseru, one of Khama's headmen, who reported the matter to Khama. When Rudd had recovered a little he asked the Bushmen to take him back to where he had buried the Concession. With great difficulty they managed to trace his tracks back to the tree to which he had tied the letter, and then he unearthed the document and the money.

On the following day, with the assistance of the Bushmen, he found two of the mules near a waterhole, forty miles away. The other four mules had disappeared. He brought the two mules back to the cart, inspanned and again travelled south, picking up his native driver with one mule five days later. He inspanned this third mule, and with this team he and the driver arrived at Shoshong, where he bought a team of horses. He completed the journey to Mafeking by way of the western Transvaal, thence taking the coach to Kimberley, where he handed the Concession to Rhodes.

The main facts of what happened then appear from the following letter Rudd wrote to Maguire and myself.

Capetown,
23rd Nov., '88.

'My dear Thompson and Maguire,

'I last wrote to you from Mafeking. . . . I got King to take me on from there to S. where I found old Geering the post contractor and I took him all the way to Kimberley using his horses at each station. My dates were Mafeking Saturday 4 p.m., Vryburg where Newton had an excellent breakfast and bath ready for me at 11 a.m. on Sunday, Kimberley at 5 p.m. I at once saw M. but Rhodes was busy with a meeting but we met at seven at dinner and then had a long talk. The outcome was that I should wire you via Mafeking that Rhodes would start for Bulawayo with the utmost despatch. I then went down and slept in the train and Rhodes joined me in the morning. The train was crowded and we got little chance of talking on the way down. Once here we called on the Governor who was very pleased to hear the result of our mission and raised no difficulty as to the guns. He was strongly in favour of at once publishing the Concession but Rhodes was afraid that some agitation against the guns might be

got up by the Transvaal and Bond party, and that it was safer not to publish until the guns were in Bechuanaland.

Having ascertained that the guns were not to be got here but had to be imported it was ultimately decided to publish a 'Communication' in each of the papers and not the Concession in extenso and also to insert the advertisement warning people against entering Matebeleland.

In train 24th Nov. I was cut short in my letter and had no time to continue it in Capetown, so shall try to write here. . . . Rhodes is with me. I drew the Communications for the papers and left them (with the notice) to be inserted this morning. I have no copy to send you, everything has been so hurried, but will see you get the next papers; we say nothing about the guns and only roughly allude to the payments but give everything else more or less in extenso. Rhodes warmly approved and the Governor also went carefully through and approved them. We also drafted a letter from me to the Government enclosing copy of the Concession for their information. . . . Rhodes is not quite sure about his movements now and talks of waiting for the guns but I am pressing him to go as it would I think be unwise to delay. . . .

5 p.m. I forgot to say that the Governor strongly advised keeping Maguire's name out of the notice of the Concession so it reads as C. D. Rudd and party. . . .While in Capetown I selected various presents, a breech-loading carbine for Sutambo, a miniature double-barrelled rifle for Lochie and also a mackintosh. . . .

'Yours sincerely,
'C. D. RUDD.'

A copy of the Concession appears in Appendix E. It was drafted in the first place by Rudd. I altered it somewhat to suit the understanding of the native mind, and then Maguire put it into legal form.

Once when discussing the scheme with Rhodes, he had said to me, 'Thompson, if you can get Lobengula's seal to a Concession I'll go nap.'

When he read the document handed to him by Rudd, he exclaimed, 'With this signature and the certificate of the missionary, I am ready to go nap, double nap, Blücher or anything.'

Rhodes did not come up to Matebililand but went instead to England to lay the Concession before the Government, and endeavour to secure a Charter. This took months to accomplish, and in the meantime it was necessary for me to hold the fort at Bulawayo.

Chapter VIII

THE SACRED FOUNTAIN

IF to obtain the Concession had proved a hard task, there was in store for us a still more difficult one. Following is the power sent to myself and Maguire from Rudd and Rhodes to act for them in Matebililand:

'Notice is hereby given that Messrs. F. R. Thompson and Rochfort Maguire or either of them in conjunction with the duly appointed representative of the other, are authorized to negotiate and conclude any agreements or sub-concessions on behalf of the undersigned, and that all such agreements whether promising payments of money, issue of script, grants of mining rights etc., will receive the sanction and approval of the holders of the Main Concession in so far as they are not repugnant to the laws of the land or the existing orders of the chief and in so far as it may be in the power of the undersigned to ratify and complete them.

'C. D. Rudd
'for self and C. J. Rhodes.

'*Capetown, 11th April, 1889.*'

One of the first points we had to decide was how the king should be given his monthly payment of £100. The allowance for October was almost due, for it had been agreed that it should be paid regularly on the appearance of the new moon, by which the natives calculated the month. He was duly paid in sovereigns, and as time passed and nobody learnt anything about our having obtained the Concession, the prospect seemed good. Then suddenly the fat was in the fire.

I had given Lobengula an undertaking that the Concession would be kept secret for a time between himself and his Indunas, but Rudd, with the best intentions, but nevertheless unfortunately, had announced in the newspapers that Lobengula had granted to us the sole right of mining, and had warned other concession hunters against coming into the country. A newspaper containing this notice, and a leading article hostile to us, was received by one of the white men. He immediately carried it to the king, and it was interpreted wholly at variance with the truth.

Mr. Helm was sent for, and the Indunas from far and near were called together. The natives were terribly excited, and the outlook for me was plainly unpleasant. At this time Maguire was absent on a journey to the border to order back Alfred Haggard, brother of the famous Rider, who was leading an exploration party on behalf of a London company. They had got as far as Tati. It will be seen that the Concession provided that as the king had been molested by people seeking concessions he empowered us to turn such persons back. Maguire was given an impi (a native regiment) to ensure his orders being carried out. With the impi he took the remaining mules and waggon, and all our cooking utensils. I was thus left alone, with little or no food in store, to subsist on what I could obtain from the natives. I had a tin of Mortons' jam, which I promptly emptied and converted into a cup and teapot combined. I do not infer that Maguire had taken all the food, as he himself was but scantily supplied, but I mention my position to explain that it was isolated.

The white men, taking advantage of my being single-handed, and of the fact that a large section of the natives, headed by a renegade Xosa named William Mziszi, was secretly opposed to Lobengula and working for his downfall, had urged the natives to call the big meeting. Thousands were summoned. They worked on a popular cry, for they said we had taken the country, and the Matebili would thenceforth have no land on which to live.

There were no means to which these white men did not have recourse. They even addressed a letter to the Queen, purporting to be from Lobengula, denying that he had given any concession and asking the Queen not to believe anything to the contrary. When I found this out I induced two of the white conspirators to sign a written statement to the effect that the letter had been faked, and was not authorized by Lobengula. I sent this statement to the Colonial Office, through Sir Hercules Robinson, and asked him to add a certificate of my standing and antecedents. Both arrived in London in the nick of time to prevent the collapse of negotiations for the Charter.

The big meeting was duly held, and I found myself forced to sit and answer such questions as these:

'Have you got a brother named Rhodes who eats a whole country for breakfast?'

'Is it not true that Maguire is a magician who rides wolves at night time?'

I was insulted in every way by the Indunas, and the white men threatened to shoot me. It was no child's play, but after being

cross-examined for nearly ten and a half hours I emerged satisfactorily. The natives insisted, however, that I should send for the original of the Concession. I was glad they did this, for it would give me breathing space. I now realized what a disaster would have ensued had I left Matebililand with Rudd. While all this was going on the Cape Government had been obliged to fill my post as Protector of Natives by appointing Mr. Glen Leary.

I wrote to Rhodes in London giving him a detailed account of what had passed in Bulawayo. I stated that as it would be a matter of life and death to me he must send back the Concession. I explained that nothing would satisfy the Matebili until they had seen it, but warned him that the white men had advised, them to insist upon the king's tearing it up. Rhodes by this time was well advanced in his negotiations for the Charter and could not at first send the original. It was in the Colonial Office, forming the basis and warrant of the Charter. As soon as it could be released which was some few months later and after Maguire had left Matebililand, it was sent to me accompanied by a letter from Rhodes. He wrote, in effect, 'I send the Concession, but do not hand it up until the knife is at your throat.'

When the Concession once again came into my hands I buried it in a pumpkin gourd, unknown to anyone save my Zulu servant Charlie. I put in with it a little corn, telling Charlie that if I happened to be knocked on the head the growing corn would mark the place where the Concession lay.

The first consignment of rifles arrived in April 1889. It had been escorted as far as Tati by Dr. Jameson[1] and Dr. Rutherfoord Harris,[2] who were on their way to a shooting and prospecting trip in the Mazoe. So far as I ever knew their visit had nothing to do with the Charter. They came in no official capacity, and their visit was an incident to which nobody alluded. It was of no significance whatever. Rutherfoord Harris was allowed to attend to one of the king's women who was ill, and he stayed for some weeks at Bulawayo, but Jameson passed on to his prospecting and did not create any particular interest. Indeed, when Jameson and I travelled up to Bulawayo after the Charter was an accomplished fact, I had to introduce him to Lobengula, who either had never seen him before or had completely forgotten him. Such, at all events, was the impression their meeting made on

[1] Afterwards a figure in South African history, but at this time known chiefly as Rhodes's medical adviser.

[2] See Appendix G for Harris's views on Matebililand, and his own account of how he worked with Jameson.

me. I do not believe the story that Jameson attended Lobengula for gout. If he did so, then it must have been at some later date after I had left the country.

Maguire returned from his encounter with Alfred Haggard on the border after the meeting at which the production of the Concession had been demanded. He found the white men busy circulating more newspaper cuttings from Cape Colony. Every statement in these newspapers they interpreted to the natives in a way to suit themselves. As a specimen of what appeared in the newspapers I quote the following, which was inserted under 'Personal Notes' in a Capetown paper: 'Mr. Maguire has seen fit to avoid the Parnell Inquiry, and bolted in order to avoid giving evidence *re* the Pigott Letters.'

This lent itself to distortion, and full advantage was taken of it. It was not easy to explain the Parnell Inquiry and the Pigott Letters to the Matebili, but they understood what bolting meant, and thenceforward everything we did was ascribed to an evil motive. Our short walks every afternoon were represented as excursions in search of gold. This state of affairs gradually became threatening. I was warned by an Induna that we might possibly be knocked on the head when taking an afternoon ramble. I accordingly suggested to Maguire that it was advisable to be guarded and circumspect in all our movements until the people had calmed down, and that we should keep together. We decided also not to wander many yards from the camp. For days together we abstained from going out of camp at all.

The weariness of this wait was most trying. Besides the inaction, there was the strain of being always in grave danger. We had insufficient exercise and unsuitable food. We were often reduced to a diet of badly ground mealies and meat. Through my physical fitness and upbringing I was somewhat better able to stand the strain. I found a certain amount of interest in my study of the Matebili, but Maguire could speak no native language, the mealies stuck in his throat, and he suffered from acute indigestion. The dilettante member of Parliament, ex-attaché, Fellow of All Souls, was completely out of his element, and he suffered accordingly.

One afternoon Maguire said that he could endure this existence no longer, and added that if he had to be knocked on the head it would be no worse than dying of indigestion. I endeavoured to dissuade him. I also tried to impress upon him that if he got into trouble it would do the Concession no good. Nevertheless, contrary to my advice, he boldly sallied forth one afternoon

carrying his yellow leather handbag. It contained his toilet accessories, for he was determined to get a 'clean up' or be killed in the attempt. Our camp at this time was at a place called Umganeng, about three miles from the king's drinking fountain, which was sacred. It was used only for medicinal purposes, religious rites and ceremonies. This spring later furnished the water supply of Bulawayo.

When Maguire arrived at the sacred fountain after a tedious tramp he sat down beside it, and after contemplating its cool depths resolved to have a bath. From his bag he brought to light an elegant assortment of tooth-pastes, brushes, powders and a bottle of eau-de-Cologne. He then began leisurely to divest himself of his garments. He had, however not got very far when he was rudely interrupted by a number of natives who had been told off by Lobengula to watch his movements. Without more ado his bag and one or two articles of his clothing were seized, and he was sternly ordered to retire. This he accordingly did, and in time found himself in camp, a sadder if not a wiser and more careful man. His intrusion into the sacred precincts of the king's drinking place, and his evident intention of polluting the water by bathing had given yet another twist to our difficulties.

He informed me that something very unpleasant had happened, and related his experiences. I abstained from the retort, 'I told you so,' and decided that the only thing to do was to put a bold face on the matter. I went down at once to the king and began, in an injured manner, to report the action of his people and their treatment of Maguire. I did not call him my brother. I found myself in the midst of ten Indunas who were being harangued by Tabeni, one of the guardians of the sacred water. In the centre of the group lay the contents of Maguire's dressing bag. Tabeni, losing no point of the story in the telling, related how he and the other custodians had beheld Maguire approach the king's sacred fountain; how the white man began to undress himself; how he washed his teeth with some red stuff; how he then took water from the fountain, gargled it in his throat and spat it forth into the pool, which became blood red; how he repeated the process, but this time the water turned white. Tabeni then described how, unable longer to endure the sight, he and the others descended upon the evildoer and seized the stuff with which the king's water was being poisoned; how one man had taken up the bottle of eau-de-Cologne and smelt it; how a Zulu boy who had travelled with white men said that the odour was one white men loved, which accounted for their horrid smell.

In face of this indictment it was no wonder that I appealed to the king in vain. It was useless my attempting to explain that Maguire had acted in perfect ignorance, that he had not the remotest intention of poisoning the water, and in any event had no means of doing so. His Majesty would listen to nothing I had to say, and curtly bade me go and talk to the Indunas.

The king's manner made me feel more than usually anxious. The situation was grave, and I had little time to spare for its ludicrous aspect. I followed the Indunas, and near their encampment they formed themselves into a circle to talk the matter out. I joined them, and when assuming my position, which was to crouch down on my haunches, one of them swore at me. 'Sit down lower,' he said. 'Do you wish to be higher than we are?' To deal successfully with natives, especially when they are excited or angry, calls for much tact and forbearance and on this occasion I became as meek as a lamb. The debate to which I had to listen was worse than any I afterwards heard in the Cape Parliament. At times it was as much as I could do to preserve my gravity, but I did so, for I knew it was no joking matter.

Finally it was agreed that Maguire and I should pay any fine they might think fit to impose. We were glad to get out of the trouble, but unfortunately the Matebili did not state the amount of the fine, or to whom it was to be paid. We were to give, and they would decide when we were to stop giving, and all other particulars. Maguire had obtained bundles of pretty calicoes from Haggard, and with this we paid a portion of the fine. When the first payment was made to the Indunas they coolly informed me that they expected more, and more they came for and received. They were continually getting more, until they had extracted twenty times the value of a reasonable fine. Poor Maguire's hair brushes, tooth brushes, clothes brushes, razors, Cherry tooth-paste and eau-de-Cologne were all confiscated. Life for him was hardly worth living without them.

On one occasion he was in grave danger of being killed by Tabeni, for at about this time Lobengula's mother died and the white men alleged that the poisoning of the water was the cause. This did not improve matters, and a day or two later Maguire secretly left for the south; to lay, as he said, the position before Rhodes. When he did so in London Rhodes's reply was characteristic. 'You're the second man of the mission who has come to do that. I know the facts as well as you do. Where is Thompson? Is he, too, coming to lay the position before me?'

'No,' Maguire replied, 'he is staying on. I didn't understand a

word of the language, you see, and I could do nothing with the whites. They are such liars.'

Following is a letter from Rudd, which I read to the king:

To Lobengula,
Chief of the Amandabili Nation.

'My Friend,

'By young Hassforther, whom you know, I send you a small present to show you that I am alive and well, and I hope you and your nation and land are enjoying prosperity.

'When I left you I travelled down very quickly in twenty days to the sea, so as to order the guns which we promised and they have been got from England and five hundred of them are sent off on waggons and should reach you about the time of harvest. The other five hundred shall be sent off as soon as I hear the first lot are safely past Khama's place. I hear white people have been telling plenty of lies about me and Thompson and Maguire, my brothers, since I left, saying we wanted your land. Do not believe them. We want nothing but the right to work for gold and metals and are the only people who are able to work so large a country and to pay you well for it. I hope when the guns are delivered your people may have more confidence in us and let us work for gold quietly. My brother Rhodes is soon going up to see you and I hope to go and see you by and by, but I must go to England first and I will try and bring you something you will like from there.

'I am sending up a few workmen to commence looking for gold, but not many at first until you give us leave. I hope you often talk to my brothers who are with you, and tell them what you want done, and I hope you will believe what they tell you for they will not tell you a lie. I salute you and wish you all happiness and prosperity.

'C. D RUDD.'

26th February, 1889.

Following are letters from Rudd and Rhodes asking me to take charge of the development of Matebililand under the Charter, and explaining why my name was left out of the original statement announcing the grant of the Concession. The letters are given virtually in full, only some details of no particular interest being omitted:

The Gold Fields of South Africa, Ltd.,
P. O. Box No. 67,
Johannesburg,
South African Republic.

10th February, 1889.

'My dear Thompson and Maguire,

'I was very glad to get your letters of the 4th and 6th January and to find from your accounts of the position that everything was in so hopeful a state. Rhodes is away in Pretoria so I have not yet shown him the letters; but we have so far discussed matters previously that I can reply on several points without seeing him.

'You are wrong in imagining that we are in any way unwilling to start prospecting or even actual mining. We have only been waiting for any hint from you of a favourable nature to organize an expedition at once and I think I may say that we shall get off some waggons within a fortnight with perhaps from six to ten practical men and all the necessaries for prospectors and we shall leave you to arrange for these to be distributed by Philip Bogie or other local men. Young Hassforther also returns and you will please bear in mind that he has our promise of support in trading or of a billet of some sort. He was intimate with the king and I think Loben liked him, and I fancy the king has a friendly way of liking to see old faces again.

'The most important matter however and one that Rhodes and I have discussed for some weeks past is the general management of affairs locally. Of course Thompson told me that I was to try to keep something warm for him in the colony and that nothing would induce him to remain above more or less permanently. Then I fancied that the trading branch of the affair might suit him where he might work in his brothers and be up and down between his own place and Matebililand frequently and where he would have a good chance of making money irrespective of the actual value of the Concession. I have however steadily become confirmed in the idea that it would be far better for his own interests and those of all concerned if he took supreme charge locally and under all circumstances I do not think it an out of the way thing to do. As far as he is concerned he will have a very large interest in the Concession itself, quite enough to give him an immense fortune if the thing is safely piloted to maturity. Second. There is no wish to stint him in regard to salary and he can start on £2000 per annum. Third. The 'concession a/c' will send up his wife and family with every comfort and build him a house near

the Helms or elsewhere if he wishes. Fourth. The position will certainly be an honorable one and a great deal of kudos would attach to it hereafter if successful. I may say that in personally urging it upon Thompson I do so feeling that I should certainly accept it myself were I in his position. I would also go so far as to say that *my* interests also are at stake and that unless there were very strong reasons against the arrangement I think I should allow them to weigh considerably in his decision.

'As regards the general interest, what one feels is that the king hates new faces and developments and that he has got accustomed to Thompson, his manners and way of talking, and I trust has gained some confidence in us through him, and it would seem both a pity and a risk to have to go over all this ground again, however good the man we sent up. What also is true of the king must to some extent be true of the people also. Rhodes and I therefore hope that T. will at any rate for the present make up his mind to remain, and we shall from time to time (should Maguire decide to leave) furnish him with such counsellors as we can.

'Rhodes's movements are uncertain and he is awaiting news from home to see whether his presence in London or Matebililand is most necessary—but under any circumstances he will go up before long.

'The second five hundred guns are still in Kimberley, the feeling being that the full one thousand would have attracted too much attention, but they can be got away in fifties or hundreds as opportunity offers when once we hear that the first lot are safe.

'There is one point to which I once referred briefly but which I have thought a good deal of as the press criticisms come in, and that is the fact that the Concession has developed into an almost exclusively personal one as far as I am concerned. I would merely explain, as I did before, that Rhodes and the Government House people thought better to suppress your names though it was against my wish to do so; that the communications to the papers were drawn by me in our three names, but on being submitted to Government House for approval were altered before being sent in, and that subsequently I have been out of the world at Luipaards Vlei and have had no communication with anyone except Leisk and the G.F.S.A. on the matter of the Concession.

'Rhodes will confirm all this, and I trust that if you have any feeling on the matter you will absolve me from any charge of shabbiness. As regards Rhodes personally he quite understands that we all contributed equally to success. . . .

'I hope to hear next mail that the Great Dance has gone off satisfactorily, sometimes I believe that there are surprises and developments after it. . . . I shall add to this letter after having a talk with Rhodes tomorrow.

'Yours sincerely,
'C. D. RUDD.'

Johannesburg S.A.R.,
14th February, 1889.

'My dear Thompson,

'I wish to write you a letter on the whole situation. In the first place you must not think that I am avoiding coming up but I saw clearly that if I left the guns would never have got through so with great difficulty I have managed to get them through the Colony and Bechuanaland.

'I have also to watch at present the political aspect and am advised from Capetown that I should first run home and lay all our prospects before the Home Government in order to obtain their cordial help as Home Press has rather been attacking the vastness of our Concession without understanding the objects. I also want them to appoint a Resident so as to stop the amateur politicians like Maund poisoning the king's mind as to position of Colony as against England, and pretending there is one Government here and a different one at home. As soon as I feel our base perfectly clear I shall come up but it is no use carting myself at once to Gubulawayo and then finding the guns stopped and the Home Government dead against our Concession.

'If I had left when desired not a single gun would have ever got through.

'I have read Rudd's letter to you and I support the offers contained therein.

'We wish you to be the Syndicate's Chief Representative at the king's and to manage the whole matter with Maguire. We offer you £2000 per annum and to build a house at once and to send up Mrs. Thompson. We feel it would be fatal if you left now.

'I think you underrate your opponents. I hear tomorrow a flaring notice is coming out in all colonial papers as from Lobengula denying our Concession and saying people may go into his country. You should get Lobengula to contradict this and forward at once, otherwise whole country will trek in. I shall, if necessary, insert Maguire's explanation saying they pretended we had said we had bought the country; but it all shows that if you left the spot just now the whole thing would go wrong.

'I ask you plainly: Do you believe you could have a grander chance in the world if the thing succeeds. (Your share alone will make you a millionaire besides all the kudos of carrying through such a work.) When I tell you that the Rand is selling to-day for thirty millions what may I ask is the value of our Concession if we get settled in harness. Our proposition is do not leave the country until we feel firmly settled and if you agree to this the terms I have named you can consider as agreed to. It may require constant residence for the next two or three years but what a prize you have in view. Your only doubt might be—can I risk Mrs. Thompson in the country. Of that you are the best judge, but I feel sure you would never stand the separation and if Mrs. Helm can risk it it seems to me the dangers are not excessive, but I should leave the judgment to your wife.

'Second. The question occurs would you do better here? I might add no. Everything is driven to a gigantic price and a crash must come. If you speculate you might make a little, but always run the risk of losing whole as prices if they give will give without warning. There is a good deal done in underwriting and I would propose, if you desire to have a punt, to give you a show and underwrite for you.

Third. Please answer definitely as to these points. I think you underrate your opponents. Could you not gradually employ them. Why not offer Moore a piece of country on shares, say, on halves, we finding the expenses. But understand the broad view I take is you must satisfy present opponents. Remember you have a country as big as one of the Australian Colonies and if we are too greedy we may lose all. . . .

'Fourth. As to prospectors, I propose to go to Kimberley to-morrow and shall start up two or three parties. Their terms will be stated to you. Maddox of Waldeck's plant will be one.

'Fifth. The first prospectors will have special terms, but afterwards I think we should offer men to go in on the following terms. The right to peg ten or more claims on any reef to be divided as follows—one-third to our Company, one-third to prospectors, one-third for capital and machinery—we finding capital and machinery if satisfied. You see a poor man would jump at it. He would get equal to three claims instead of as here one, and also have machinery put in. It would be good enough for us as we should get the details attended to, and if the reef was good easily get the capital from Europe whilst getting a third for company's rights.

'By the by Moore was always keen on alluvial. Why not arrange

to hand over an alluvial section to him. I do not care much for alluvial. It is out of reefs that you make the money.

'Now, to sum up.

'(1) I intend coming up as soon as we are safe here.

'(2) Face boldly the question. Will you stop if necessary a couple of years on terms named, and if so shall we send up your wife with your brother?

'(3) You must not leave a vacuum now.

'(4) Try and deal with your opponents.

'(5) You have full powers.

'(6) We will start first prospectors at once.

'(7) Bear in mind it is your only chance in life of a really big thing, and you know better than I how you stand and whether you can carry it through.

'(8) Remember if you believe we can carry the Concession through there is hardly any value you can put on it.

'(9) Think out carefully your alternative future as against the two or three years required.

'(10) Remember you will have Maund back soon and his policy has been to coalesce with all our opponents under promise of distributing something to each.

'(11) Always remember that as we must use whites in the country, cannot we more or less use those who are already there and have had the energy to undertake the enterprise. . . .

'I find you think there was some reason for not putting your name in the statement. I do not know the reason but Bower in Capetown was firm on the matter and altered Rudd's communiqué to the papers which contained your name. I think it was on account of Maguire's name and his former connection with the Colonial Office to whom copy of the Concession was sent. Rudd has told you Leisk has signed and copy will be sent. Of Musson's convoy four waggons belong to us. Jameson desires to take a trip to the Mazoe. I leave all details to you, only do not leave the king alone or run any risk. The thing is too big and until all whites are satisfied you cannot turn your back.

'You must also remember that the next five hundred guns will leave as soon as the runner lets us know that Jameson is past Khama's boundary so that they must be waited for and also to receive prospectors.

'I should think, disagreeable as it may be, I should let Jameson and Harris go on with their trip alone. They could also prospect on Umgula and Mazoe district.

'Yours,

'C. J. RHODES.

'PS. I am returning to Kimberley and will deal with Tati management. Always remember I am in honour bound to come up and also really desire to do so, but I see clearly at present that I must remain here or even may have to run home in order to get the sanction and support of Her Majesty's Government.

'Maguire will fully understand it. Please read this to Maguire.

'C. J. RHODES.'

In spite of Rhodes's extreme anxiety that I should stay in Matebililand I said at once that I did not wish to expose my wife and family to the dangers and limitations of the life, I promised, however, that I would remain for the present. I stayed on for eight months after receiving his letter, without break of any kind, until I received the news that the Charter was an accomplished fact. When I received the following letter Maguire had left Matebililand and I was holding the fort alone.

Westminster Palace Hotel,
Victoria Street,
London S.W.
11th April, 1889.

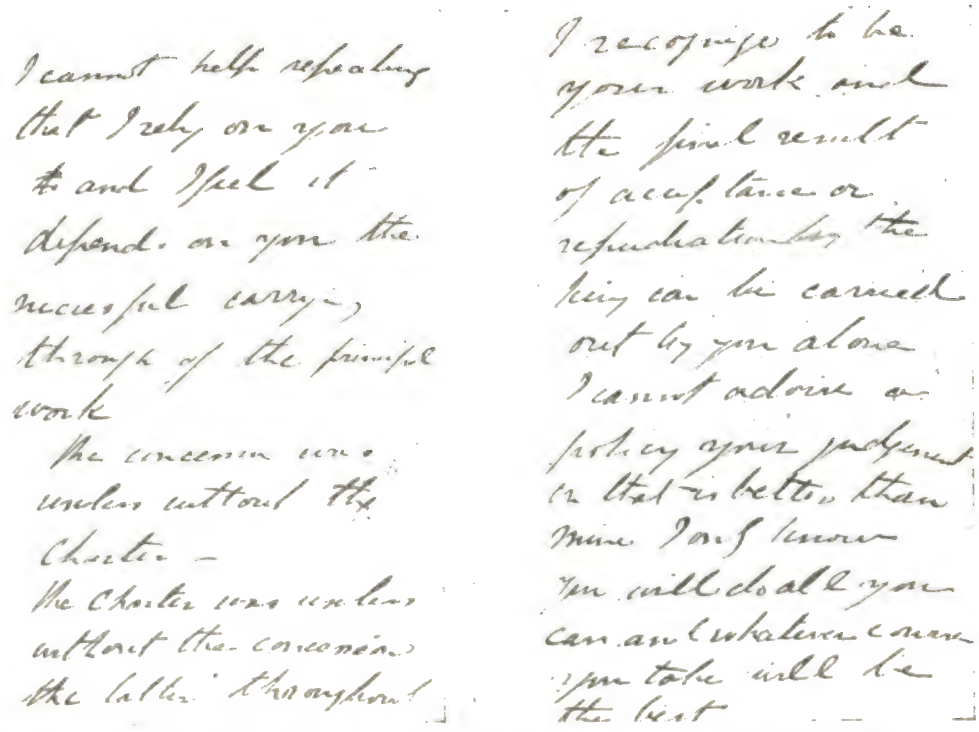
'My dear Maguire and Thompson,

'We have settled with Maund at the request of H.M. Government so as to have no opposition in interior they will then I believe support Concession. You must work with him and we leave all details to your mutual brains I think you should read my old letter of instructions to you to him and in case faulty amend as you all think best.

'You will be really a Council and for goodness sake pull together or you will bogle all.

'Yours,
'C. J. RHODES.'

Rhodes's letters never contained anything remotely resembling careful punctuation, and often had no punctuation at all. I append another about a plan for drilling the Matebili with their new rifles.



I cannot help repeating that I rely on you to and I feel it depends on you the successful carrying through of the principle work the concession was useless without the Charter — the Charter was useless without the concession the latter throughout I recognize to be your work and the final result of acceptance or repudiation by the King can be carried out by you alone I cannot advise or further your judgment is that is better than mine I only know you will do all you can and whatever course you take will be the best

A FACSIMILE OF PART OF A LETTER FROM C. J. RHODES TO THOMPSON

Kimberley Diamond Fields,
South Africa.
4th March, 1889.

A. BEIT.
Telegraphic address,
Beitus, Kimberley.

'My dear ——[1]

'It has just struck me that it would be a great pull to import an English officer to drill the Matebili with their new guns. You might ask the king if he would like it. It might be sufficient to pick a good drill sergeant out of the Guards he would get great influence with the regiment armed with rifles. Let me know your ideas—Breton would have done but like a fool he has got engaged to be married.

'Yours,
'C. J. RHODES.

'If you are very favourable you might telegraph Girdlestone to cable me home it might catch me before leaving—and I could bring the man out——.'

Following is an extract from a business letter from Rhodes to Thompson:

'My plan is if the men doubt your power as to sub-concessions and salaries show my power and my instructions your arrangements that at present Lobengula should not put his name to paper or even be asked to. Sub-concessions must come under our guarantee under Charter. Very dangerous to ask king to begin signing fresh papers, once started it will never finish let him feel he has signed for the last time.

'I cannot help repeating that I rely on you, and I feel it depends on you the successful carrying through of the principal work.

'The Concession was useless without the Charter—the Charter was useless without the Concession. The latter throughout I recognize to be your work, and the final result of acceptance or repudiation by the king can be carried out by you alone.

'I cannot advise a policy, your judgment on that is better than mine. I only know you will do all you can and whatever course you take will be the best.'

[1] In the original the name is cut out and there is thus no proof that the letter was addressed to Thompson, but it was found among his papers.

Chapter IX

'RUNNYMEDE'

IT was soon after Maguire's departure that his ignorance of native customs placed me again in a most dangerous position. It came about thus. The Matebili were in the habit of making a raid every year into the Mashona country, and at times penetrated so far as to cross the Zambesi into the Mashokolombo and Barotse country, always returning with ivory, cattle and slaves. Some of the slaves were kept by the king, and the remainder distributed among the Indunas, who might sell them as they chose. The king had among his slaves, captured in this year's raid, a little fellow of eight years. As he was a slave he was more or less starved. In common with the rest of the captured people he was in the habit of roaming away from the King's kraal to seek what he could find to satisfy his hunger. A portion of the day he spent in visiting our camp. We called him Jacob, and if we happened to be eating when he appeared Maguire or I, out of sheer pity, would throw him a bone. These acts awakened in him gratitude and affection, and he became very attached to Maguire.

Two or three days after Maguire had left me for the south I was alone with my native servant Charlie when a feeling of impending danger came over me. Charlie would always say in his broken English, as he tucked me up in my blanket at night, 'Oh, master, we never come out of this country alive. The Matebili go kill us, I know.' It was not a cheery remark to one situated as I was, and his pitiful sigh as he uttered it on this particular night was infectious. Maguire had been gone for four days when I was hastily summoned by a breathless messenger from Lobengula to attend immediately. 'Don't you hear that the king calls you?' said the man.

'How should I be able to hear him speak from here?' I replied.

'Come quickly, and don't stay talking there.' he said.

I followed the man, trying to guess why I was called. I felt that I might be going to my doom. As I entered the king's kraal I received an angry scowl from the natives, and to my salute the king vouchsafed no reply. He gave me no sign to approach. I seated myself in the usual fashion, and awaited in silence a signal from Lobengula to come nearer. The situation, I now knew, was

serious. It seemed to me the longest hour I had ever passed in my life. Then the stillness was broken by the king's saying, 'Get nearer Thompson.' When I did so he said, 'Is not Maguire your brother?'

I hardly knew how to reply. I decided to hedge and answered, 'He is not my brother in the sense of being my mother's son. He is only my brother in the sense that he comes from the same kraal and is of the same people.'

The great man frowned. After a moment's pause he burst out, 'You are a liar, Thompson. You have two words. Did you not tell me that Maguire and Rudd were your brothers, and that of your three brothers the eldest was at home in charge of the homestead?'

I endeavoured to explain the difference between a brother by blood and one by friendship, but the king would not listen.

'Fruit,' said he, 'does not fall far from the tree, and the calves of the same bull are much alike. Know that Rudd has taken the fly-blown paper to the Queen, and has told a lot of lies to her that I have sold you the country. Maguire rides on wolves and has tried to poison my drinking place, and now he has stolen my slave. What have you to say to this?'

'King,' said I, 'I can answer no more than I have done about Rudd's going away, and of Maguire's poisoning the water of your fountain, but I do say this much in regard to the taking away of your slave—that if Maguire has done so, see, here is my neck, you can cut off my head.'

I perceived that my words took effect, and after one or two angry remarks he bade me begone. I was not sorry to get away, for his rage was beyond control. I felt that I had lost all favour with the king, and with the people also.

A week later an impi of fifty, begrimed, hungry and travel-stained, appeared at my camp. As I went to meet them I felt acutely that the constant worry and trouble I had to endure was becoming unbearable. On reaching the opening of my enclosure I saw a man carrying the little slave Jacob, whom he threw down like a log, and then addressed me. He said savagely, 'You liar, Thompson.'

I asked the meaning of this in the most polite manner I could affect, and was told in reply to ask the boy from whence he had come.

'Where do you come from?' I asked him.

'Well,' he replied, 'I heard the night before the white man (Maguire) left that he was going to leave here and go back to his

own country. He had been good to me, and I made up my mind to go with him. I ran off and got a long way ahead of him, to wait until he came up and go with him to his country. On the following morning he did come up, and he told me to get into his waggon and go with him.'

What could I say in face of this? The impi had found the lad fifty miles away at Maguire's waggon, on the road leading south to the Colony. Fortunately for Maguire himself, he had walked on from the outspan, and so the impi did not find him there. He would, in all probability, have been made to trot back to Bulawayo, carrying Jacob all the way. Knowing that they had me there, they did not bother to bring Maguire's waggon back.

Here was a nice fix! Had I not sworn by all that was holy that the boy was not with my brother? Had I not offered my head as a proof of good faith? I had felt positive that Maguire could never have been so foolish as to allow the king's slave to go with him.

I asked the Induna not to trouble the king on the matter, and said that I would pay for my lie, as they called it. All that I had at my disposal were two spoons and a knife. I had not even a spare blanket. The value of the spoons and knife, however, may be gauged from what I have written about the value of an empty cartridge case. The Induna took the things and went off, and I flattered myself on being well out of the difficulty. In this I deceived myself, for they had not been gone half an hour when a messenger summoned me instantly to the king.

On my arrival at the royal kraal I sat down and waited, but on this occasion the men of the impi began talking of how they had walked one hundred miles to catch the slave boy who had been taken by Maguire. Their ominous scowls, their angry words and threatening manner, boded ill for me. Although it is customary, to impress a visitor with a sense of the king's dignity, to keep him waiting, Lobengula did not delay the proceedings as long as usual. Calling to me in a sharp tone he said, 'Thompson, where is your neck?'

I remained very quiet.

'You hear me?' asked the king.

'If,' said I slowly, 'a child has done wrong, does its father kill it, oh king? Does not a horse stumble though it has four feet? I have but two. I have no answer to make, for you will not believe me, because I said that Maguire did not steal the slave. I am found out in what the impi reports to you, and must conclude that I must bear the consequences. But I can tell you this, oh

king, that I did not know the child had gone with Maguire.'

'But, Thompson,' said the king, 'now you are lying again. Why did you try to buy the Induna with these things?'

He solemnly produced the knife and spoons.

'You said they were not to tell the king. Are you the king? Do you wish to undermine my authority?'

'The Induna,' I replied, 'had taken much trouble, and it was to reward him that I gave the things, being thankful that the slave was restored. I am afraid to speak now that I am stated to be a liar, and certainly events seem to bear that construction, for the slave was found at Maguire's waggon. I can only crave forgiveness as a son from his father.'

This latter part of my address produced a marked impression in my favour, and after a silence of some moments the king decided, to my intense relief, that for the present he would pardon my offence. But his decision caused great dissatisfaction to the impi. In their opinion my body was not good enough for hungry dogs. As I left the kraal I was greeted by curses long and deep, and they came from all sides. I was called liar, thief, magician; I was told they would have my blood yet.

Lobengula had a strong force of espionage. Whenever I had a conversation with him, sure enough the next day men would try to wheedle from me what the discussion had been about. Good-looking women too, sometimes the queens, tried their hands. By these means the king tested whether I could be trusted. The whites were indefatigable in spreading false reports, and in this case they persuaded the natives that I knew perfectly well that Maguire had taken the slave. They, too, had their smiling native spies. Nothing would have pleased them more than to have had some little proof of my repeating the king's confidential remarks.

My only support and friends at this time were Ben Wilson[1] and Alexander Bogie. I should have been only too glad to have left the country, but apart from the difficulty of getting away there was too much at stake. I had declared without avail that I was innocent of the charges brought against me, and I lived in fear of my life. But nevertheless I felt that I must stay and keep the Concession safe for our partnership. This I was determined to do at all costs.

Some time after Maguire arrived in London the dreariness of my existence was cheered by the following letter from Rhodes:

[1] Later widely known and highly esteemed in Rhodesia as Mr. 'Matebili' Wilson.

Westminster Palace Hotel,[1]
London.

'Dear Thompson

'Stick to it I trust to you alone Upon you depends the whole thing. The Concession I consider your work the Charter mine. Without the latter the former unworkable. Nature abhors a vacuum. I ask you is there a better chance in the world for you? Besides being one of the richest men in the Colony you will have the kudos. Napoleon was prepared to share the world as long as he got Europe. Work on these lines. Can't you give the whites who are in the country something. If any doubt your power of attorney show them this. Girdlestone will pay all cheques that you draw. I feel you will not fail me. Stick to the post

'Yours
'C. J. RHODES.'

I had to content myself with an occasional letter from Rhodes. Continually I was pestered, and called to the Council, about when the original of the Concession would be received. My answer was always the same: 'When my elder brother comes, then we will give it to the Nation.' In June I received another letter from Rhodes, which filled me with the hope that I should soon receive the promised cable.

Westminster Palace Hotel,
11th June, 1889.

'My dear Thompson

'I am so near success that I hope you will carry through your part. I trust implicity to you and hope you will be willing to remain for the present. As soon as I have finished with —— I will come out and go up I may say I am getting every support but cannot leave until I have everything signed and sealed.

'Meantime it would be a great blow to me to hear you had left as I have not the same confidence in the others.

'Yours
'C. J. RHODES.'

The story of how the Charter was obtained may be told in a few words. On his arrival in England Rhodes saw the late Baroness Burdett-Coutts, unfolded his plan to her and asked for

[1] The original of this letter has been lost.

her help. She advised him to consult the Rev. Dr. Bruce, of Edinburgh, one of the leading spirits in Central African missionary work. Rhodes took her advice, went to Edinburgh, and showed the Concession to Bruce. After reading it, and the certificate by the Rev. C. D. Helm, Dr. Bruce said, 'This is good enough for me. I will help you.'

Rhodes then returned to London, Dr. Bruce accompanying him. Baroness Burdett-Coutts arranged a party, one of the guests being the Prince of Wales. Rhodes was presented to him, and told him about the Concession. The Prince was keenly interested and promised to use his influence with the Queen. Shortly afterwards Rhodes was invited to Balmoral. He accompanied the Prince of Wales there, and laid the Concession and his scheme before Queen Victoria. The Queen intimated that she would consider the matter and discuss it with her Ministers. Rhodes then returned to London, and although a Liberal, got in touch with the Conservatives, who were then in power, and also reminded Parnell of his contribution of £10,000 to the Irish party some time before.

It had been arranged that I should stay at Bulawayo until I received from Rhodes the code word 'Runnymede', which would mean 'Charter signed and sealed; position consummated; matters little what happens your end'. It was about three months after I had received Rhodes's letter that the cable arrived—the word that meant my release. I received also the news, from Rutherfoord Harris, a somewhat prolific letter writer, that Rhodes was on his way out. Rhodes was still negotiating to buy out all interests in Matebililand and Mashonaland—Barotse concessions, and every other concession, good, bad and indifferent. The word 'Runnymede' was thus for my ears alone. I accordingly felt that as a matter of policy I must remain until Rhodes arrived before I produced the original of the Concession to the king. But Rhodes never came. He was never to meet Lobengula.

Following is an extract from a letter I wrote to my wife:

12th September, 1889.

'. . . I know life is too short to be parted for the time we have been. Rhodes is supposed to be here at the end of this month, if not I must really come away. I cannot possibly stand it. I have strained nerve after nerve to remain, until now I am getting desperate. . . .

'I got a letter from Rudd, who adds to my misery by saying I have had a long spell up here and he wonders if I shall be at Bulawayo when this letter reaches me. Don't be surprised to hear

of my leaving this place any day now. Now the Charter has been granted (private) it makes no difference. Rhodes was to have arrived last month and intended coming up at once to Bulawayo. . .

'I must explain what that "private" means about the Charter. I do not want it to be known from me—everybody fancies that it is so. We don't want it publicly known.'

Chapter X

A KILLING BY NIGHT

As time went on the Matebili became more and more excited. Thousands came from all directions to ask the king if it were true that the white dog Thompson had bought the land. Among the Matebili I was now the most notorious person in the country, and among a section of black and white schemers the most hated. My main difficulty arose from the false interpretation of the Concession by white men at Bulawayo. They told the king to study the word *land*. It was true that the word occurred in the Concession, but in a very different sense from that imparted to it by these men. In misrepresenting the Concession to the Matebili they relied chiefly on the passage reading: 'Whereas I have been much molested of late by divers persons seeking and desiring to obtain grants and concessions of Land and Mining rights in my territories.'

A copy of the document was produced at a council of three hundred Indunas, and one of the whites asked me to interpret the word 'land'. He covered up the other words of the paragraph. I asked the Indunas which of them could tell me whether a beast was male or female when only part of the hide was shown. They answered, 'None, unless he saw the remaining part of the body.' 'I, too,' I said, 'cannot interpret that word, for you allow this man to cover up the rest of the sentence.' I stoutly refused to discuss the word out of its context as the whites would have had me do.

This meeting lasted from seven in the morning until five in the afternoon. I was asked by every Induna in turn from whom I had bought the country. My answer was, 'Matebili, did I not tell you when first I came into this country, about a year ago, that we were not farmers and wanted no land, cattle or grass, but that we wanted the gold in the stone?'

It had been my policy to deal only with the king himself. I took up the attitude with him that he alone was the judge of my conduct, and that I did not mind the opinion of others as long as he approved of what I did.

Thus I sat from early morning till late in the afternoon in a broiling sun, most of the time on my haunches, not being allowed

to move. I had a terrible headache, from which I was then suffering daily. It was caused by worry, anxiety and wretched food. I had covered my eyes with my soft felt hat, having determined not to answer another question, when I heard a general salute. I took no notice, thinking that from where the Indunas were sitting they had caught sight of the king. Then to my surprise I heard close in front of me: 'Tomoson, why do you cover your eyes like a son-in-law when his mother-in-law is near?'

Among the Matebili to gaze upon or stand in the path of one's mother-in-law is a crime. The custom is designed, presumably, to obviate one's becoming too familiar with her.

I ripped off my hat with apologies. 'King, I did not know that you were here.'

'What are they asking you Tomoson?'

'They ask me from whom I got the land.'

'What have you told them?'

'If they say I have the land, let the man stand before me and tell me from whom I got it.'

'Pogee,' said the King; meaning, 'Very sound answer, what more is there to say?'

He was apparently well satisfied as he walked away, and I felt much relieved. His confronting me at this meeting of his Indunas surprised me, and when I thought it over I saw much cause for anxiety. I had many long conversations with him, and I had no doubt that the Indunas were anxious to know all he had ever said to me. He had seen me under the strain of a long cross-examination, and I assumed he had wondered whether I had misinterpreted him or implicated him. He had seemed uneasy, and so I hoped that my answer to the crucial question had assured him that wild horses would never drag from me anything he had to say. There was really nothing to drag from me, because I knew that he had neither the wish nor the power to give his people's land away. But his evident desire to vindicate himself in the eyes of the Indunas showed how serious the agitation among the Matebili was becoming, and that the Indunas were prepared to suspect even the king himself. In their eyes he had become far too friendly with me. The serious trouble all this foreshadowed was not long in coming.

The old Prime Minister Lotjie, seated beside me, was within a few minutes accused by the Indunas of having advised the king to take the thousand rifles in exchange for gold. The two leading Indunas, who held offices roughly equivalent to the Serjeant at Arms and Black Rod in Parliament, went in to report to the

king in his private sanctum. They returned with a declaration that the affairs of the nation rested in their hands, and whatever they did would be right.

I turned to the half-dozen white men who sat away to the right, scum as I regarded them, and I said, 'Who is responsible for this? You, who have told all these villainous lies of what will happen when the Charter is granted.'

Not many days later the decree was passed that Lotjie and his followers were to look on light no more.

For the few days between the ending of the long Indaba and Lotjie's execution, however, things seemed to relapse into quiet, a storm of suspicion appeared to have blown over. But I remained extremely uneasy, and so I decided to drive to Hope Fountain, the mission station, to discuss the turn of events with Mr. Helm. I stayed there for a day or two; and on my way back I learned of Lotjie's execution and of how he had faced his death.

The poor old fellow had stood erect. He handed his snuffbox to a man standing near. He was taken outside the Council kraal, and on knelling down he said, 'Do as you think fit with me. I am the king's chattel'. One blow from the executioners stick sufficed; one smart blow on the back of the head.

My distress may be understood when I learnt that my friend and ally had been put to death. The ostensible reason for his execution was that he had advised the king to accept the rifles and sign the concession. But in reality he had been made the scapegoat to protect the king from the rising tide of suspicion among the Matebili that their king had traded away their rights to their land.

The night of Lotjie's last day was spent by the Matebili in putting to death the men, women and children of his family and clan. It was a terrible night; a night akin to some others in my experience. I remember one such, when Charlie crept close to me in the darkness for protection and softly exclaimed as each dull thud of the executioning stick came to our ears, followed by the shrill cry, 'Ay yi yi'. Some three hundred men, women and children were killed—Lotjie's whole kraal with the possible exception of the sucking child.

On my way back from Hope Fountain, when I was pondering the heavy tidings of Lotjie's death, and what they might portend, I heard a native following me. He was riding a grey horse. 'Tomoson', he called quietly, 'the king says the killing of last night is not yet over.'

Knowing Lobengula as I did, believing as I had every reason

to that he had a certain friendliness towards me, I took this as a well-meant hint; as, indeed, the last service he could do me. As I stopped to consider the message, I saw a crowd of young Matebili in war dress advancing. Their actions left me in no doubt of their intentions. I had decided, in the long thoughts that came to me on Lotjie's danger, what I should do in such an eventuality. I should make a bolt for it. I could not take Rhodes's permission to hand up the Concession when the knife was at my throat, for the men who were anxious to kill me were even more anxious to destroy that document. There were, indeed, but two ways of preserving the Concession at this stage: to leave it safely hidden, and to remove myself from reach of the Matebili.

Up to the time Lotjie was killed I had relied on two things for my safety: first my belief that the king really liked me and wished me no harm; and secondly, that he would be afraid to kill a white man with such powerful friends as mine appeared to be. But when Lotjie was killed I perceived that the king was so hard pressed that he was playing for his own safety. If he could bring himself to sacrifice so trusted a counsellor as Lotjie, he could not be expected to feel unduly anxious about me. Indeed, so far as he was concerned, I could do him no better service than to disappear until the storm blew over. The question whether it was my duty to remain in Bulawayo did not arise, for when I received the cabled word 'Runnymede' my duty had come to an end. But even had I not thus been released, every dictate of prudence on behalf of Rhodes and Rudd, and all who were now building hopes on the Charter, pointed to my avoiding its being associated with bloodshed or any fatal 'accident'.

Naturally, after I had got safely away, it was in the interest of all concerned, Europeans and Matebili, in Bulawayo and elsewhere, to represent that I had never been in danger. No Matebili wished to step forward and say he had intended to kill me, and nobody associated with the Charter wished to suggest that the Matebili had repented of the Concession. This was all in the nature of things, but in later years a legend emerged from the Jameson romances that I had merely got the funks and run away. I think I can fairly claim that getting the funks has never been a characteristic of mine, but even were this not so my decision to make a bolt for it that morning was a wise and clear-headed one. Had I guessed the sufferings that lay before me I might well have hesitated.

However, to resume my story, I cut the fastest horse from the traces, jumped on its back, and rode hard to Dawson's store to

borrow a saddle. Then I made for the ford in the Umgusa River, which was the very place to get through to the south. I was soon lost to the hunt in the wildness of the country. In the scurry I lost my hat. After riding for hours in the blazing sun I had to make a hat by tying four knots in my handkerchief, and stuffing it with grass. Towards sundown I found myself in unknown country in the middle of the Kalahari Desert. I had neither food nor water, and I might be attacked by lions. I tied my horse, climbed into a tree and there spent the night. The next day I rode until the horse knocked up, and then I walked. Walking and running I covered thirty or forty miles. My tongue became swollen, and towards evening stuck out of my mouth. My eyes were so bloodshot that I could scarcely see and my breath was short.

At nightfall on the second day I came to a waterhole. I lay down at the edge of the water and bathed my head. My tongue was protruding with thirst and I very painfully drank and drank, the water going into me like water into a hot kettle. As a result I got dysentery next morning. When feeling very weak I met some Makalaka natives cooking a pot of mealies, and from them, in exchange for my pocket-knife, I bought some mealies to eat.

I contrived to struggle on, and then luckily came upon a trader with a mule waggon. He gave me a lift to Shoshong and from there I travelled to Mafeking.

I telegraphed to my wife and to Rhodes. I asked my wife to come up at once to Mafeking with my three children. I had not seen any of them for fifteen months. My reply from Rhodes was an urgent request, a frantic plea, that I should return to Bulawayo. The Governor of Cape Colony, in his capacity as High Commissioner, also telegraphed to me asking me to return.

I was surprised and disappointed at these requests, as I judged that I had done more than my fair share. Nevertheless Rhodes insisted that to produce the original of the Concession, and ceremoniously hand it to Lobengula, was still essential to the Charter; and what was more, that this should be done as soon as possible. I had to agree with him that I was the only man to do it, but I did not relish returning to Bulawayo. I thought it would have been much more to the point had Rhodes himself decided to go to Bulawayo. Now that the Charter was fully secured in all directions it seemed to me that he himself should have appeared with me in Matebililand to institute its administration.

I found Jameson at Mafeking. He had received instructions to go to Bulawayo to represent Rhodes if I refused to return.

But as he did not know Lobengula, so far as I was aware, and certainly did not know a native language, and had no experience of treating with natives, I agreed to go back with him, introduce him to Lobengula, and hand to the king the original of the Concession.

Rhodes had written to me from Kimberley dated 28th September, 1889:

'I want you to return because the king recognizes you as the Concession and you know perfectly well it will not be ratified unless you are present. As soon as the guns are taken you can come down for your holiday as you stated in your proposals and the relays of mules will save you time in travelling. I have always recognized thoroughly what you have gone through but it seems so hard for your own future that through not seeing it through to the finish which is so near you should lose your credit and reward. Please do not view this as a threat but look at it practically if we lose the Concession we have nothing for the Charter. I should have accompanied Jameson but I have to deal with the following:

'(1) Sir S. Shippard (2) the police question to which I am contributing (3) Home Board of Charter (4) Extension of railway and relations with Sprigg (5) Extension of telegraph Mafeking to Tati for which I am paying (6) Amalgamation with Bechuana Co (7) Negotiations with Paul Kruger to arrange as to his giving up all claim to the north.

'If I were to isolate myself in the interior at this moment the whole of the base would go wrong.

'Yours truly

'C. J. RHODES.'

In my decision to return I was influenced by the High Commissioner's request as well as by Rhodes's urgent representations, but the decision was so much against my inclination, and so bitterly disappointed my hopes of seeing my family, that I told Rhodes it would be my last journey into Matebililand. In all the circumstances my feelings were natural, but had I been vouchsafed any prevision of what was to happen in Matebililand in Jameson's regime I think my feeling for Lobengula alone would have compelled me to accept Rhodes's offer to take charge there.

On my arrival at Bulawayo I set about making a few grants to the white men who had schemed against me, and in one way or another they received a few thousand pounds. There were con-

cession hunters amongst them who believed that they held prior claims in Matebililand; and they had to be compensated for their hypothetical losses. The explanation of this appears in Rutherfoord Harris's letter reproduced at the end of this chapter, and Rhodes had also written to me, 'I am arranging with the Colonial Office to withdraw any chance of action against any of the whites, so you can assure them they are safe.'

I then produced the Concession and handed it to the king. As he took the paper he turned to the white men and said, 'What have you got to say? There is the paper.'

Their spokesman answered, 'King, this document is all right. We were wrong in all we said about Thompson.'

With a smile the king looked at them, and rubbing his hand across his mouth he said, 'Tomoson has rubbed fat on your mouths. All you white men are liars. Tomoson, you have lied the least.'

He handed the Concession back to me, 'You have been begging me for the last fourteen months to let you go back to your wife and children,' he said. 'When you first came here to Matebililand you likened yourselves to hunters. Now let me tell you. When I went killing elephants as a young man I did not, at every stride of my horse, turn and look for my wife and family. I even let my wife suffer in patience, for when I had killed my elephant I waited to let the head decompose so that the tusks would come out easily. When at last I did pull them out, I carried them and I threw them at my Intombi's feet. Then she became an object of envy, feeling that she at any rate had a man and a bull for a husband. Now here, take this fly-blown paper, throw it at your wife's feet, and let her bosoms heave and let her be an object of envy. Now are you sure that your heart is white towards the Matebili?'

'Yes, king,' I said.

'Show it to me, then.'

I feared that this might mean sitting down to wait for another two months with him, so I sent a message to Rhodes: 'Things are well. Send me a peace offering.'

Rhodes asked the Duke of Fife, a Director of the Chartered Company, to send out two bulls. They arrived when I had returned to Capetown. They were a magnificent pair of Poll Angus, but jet black, the colour conveying to the Matebili almost a declaration of war. I explained that they could not possibly be sent, and they were eventually given to Sir James Sievewright. Albert Grey, afterwards Earl Grey, who was interested in the Chartered

Company, then went to Hereford and picked two snow white bulls. These were sent out by steamer, carried to Kimberley by train, where two buck-waggons were fitted up with stalls taking fodder and bran, and so they eventually arrived at Lobengula's kraal as my peace offering.

Before I left the king gave me a lion's pad with the claws thrown back, a symbol that he, the Lion, had left me free without hurt.

I alone handled the Concession throughout all the negotiations and I myself handed it back to Rudd.

I can truly say, and all my dealings with natives bear me out, that up to the very last moment of my residence with Lobengula I acted honestly towards him as a friend, and in the conviction that the Concession would bring immediate prosperity to him and his people. Fate willed it otherwise.

Rhodes always assured me that he personally did not want the gold *per se*, or the land, but rather territorial administrative powers. He wrote to me that he wanted no rights in land, nor did I at any time imagine that we were entitled to them. I gave Lobengula an affidavit, sworn to by myself as a J.P., that we claimed no land. During the trial by the Privy Council in London of the Chartered Company's claim to the land I sent a statement to the Privy Council, through Lord Harcourt, declaring that I had never in the whole period of my residence in Matebililand pretended to lay claim to the land under the Concession. This is the metaphor I used in discussing matters with Lobengula. I likened his country to a cow and said, 'King, the cow is yours. If she dies the skin is yours, if she calves the calf is yours. I only want the milk.' The Matebili regarded milk as only fit for children, and not food for men.

When discussing the ownership of the land with the late Mr. Hawksley, solicitor to the Chartered Company, I pointed out how futile it would be for the Company to set up a claim to the land, even by right of conquest. If the claim were made by right of conquest the land must belong to the Crown. Hawksley said to me, 'The Company is leaning on a frail reed if it tries to set up a claim to the land.' He knew more of the inner workings of the Company than the Directors did themselves.

Rhodes discussed the question of the land with Mr. Joseph Chamberlain who said, 'Well, you have got the gold of the whole country, which in itself is nine points of possession, so I should say that even if you have it not in theory, you have it in practice. But I should like you to get some territorial acknowledgment

from Lobengula, further strengthening your claim as a whole.'

Rhodes took this as a well-meant hint, and as a result a German named Lippert, a cousin of Beit, journeyed to Matebililand and obtained a paper from Lobengula. It was alleged to have been signed by Lobengula, and it granted administrative powers over the land *qua* land.

Rhodes asked me what I thought of it. I said, 'If it suits your purpose, Rhodes, and is acceptable to the Colonial Office I am not going to raise the point. But knowing Lobengula's attitude and the attitude of his nation towards the land question I can't help thinking that if he actually made the mark or the seal himself, he did so without understanding the full purport of the document.'

This was one of the papers regarded as the last stone in the foundation of the British South Africa Chartered Company.

The following letter from my wife to Rhodes reveals the disappointment she and I experienced upon my return to Bulawayo.

Burlingham Cottage,
Wynberg.
11th October, 1889.

'Dear Mr. Rhodes,

'Is it possible that you have known all I know to-day. About the Prime Minister's[1] death and my husband's peril. Did you know that the latter had to walk through most frightful country for miles and miles and after being absolutely a prisoner for more than a year in such a country he gets to Mafeking and you should wish him to return. I know he has sacrificed a great deal, but now the Charter has been signed surely his work is finished. I am almost heartbroken with grief and vexation that such a grand and unselfish man should be imposed upon in such a manner. I am afraid to write more. Oh! do pray get Mr. Thompson back, if anything happens to him I will never forgive you. Why could not those men have gone alone last Saturday from Mafeking? For goodness sake answer this and tell me you have sent after Mr. Thompson.

'Yours truly,

'GEORGINA THOMPSON.'

[1] Lotjie

Rhodes replied:

Kimberley,
1oth October, 1889.

'Dear Mrs. Thompson,

'I got Dr. Harris to write to you all particulars. I do not think you have the slightest cause for anxiety. I have received news from Gubulawayo giving intelligence a week later than your husband's departure. It states everything is quiet and Mr. Moffat sent me a special message from the king himself.

'Yours truly,
'C. J. RHODES.'

Following is the letter from Rutherfoord Harris to which Rhodes referred:

Kimberley,
1oth October, 1889.

'Dear Mrs. Thompson,

'I think you will like to know why it was, after coming as far as Mafeking, your husband decided to return. You will remember that we have hitherto not felt in a position to show the king the original Concession, owing to the way in which our opponents misinterpreted everything. Well, on Mr. Rhodes's return, he at once took steps to reconcile and conciliate all of our antagonists and finally, came to such terms with them, that their interests equally with ours, are concerned in the carrying through and ratification of the original concession. Even Moore, your husband's great adversary, is now quite on our side; directly this was done we dispatched special horse messengers to your husband telling him all we had done and also, to show the original and get the guns taken and come down. Most unfortunately for him, he had left two days before this letter arrived and passing it on the road, only, I think, knew of its contents, on seeing Dr. Jameson at Mafeking. He therefore decided to return with Dr. Jameson, Major Maxwell and Mr. Dennis Doyle, picking up Mr. Moore *en route*, and then getting all the whites into line with him, to show the original, satisfy the king if possible, and *then return.* The original can only be shown with your husband present, as the king, as you well know, looks on your husband as the concession, and were he not there, there would be an absolute deadlock. Knowing this full well, of course your husband decided to go back, rather than to mar the success of what he has been doing so well for the last fifteen months.

'The whole party travel with *fresh* mules every hundred miles and reach Bulawayo, all being well, next Wednesday. I think two or three weeks will see all the negotiations through and they will then return with the same numbers, thus bringing them back here easily within six or eight weeks I hope.

'Major Maxwell and Mr. Dennis Doyle will stay there while your husband comes down and probably even much longer.

'I think a little more patience and courage and all will be well.

'Yours truly,
'RUTHERFOORD HARRIS.'

Only once did I again visit Rhodesia. It was in 1904, as a member of the South African Native Affairs Commission. I was standing on the railway platform at Figtree when I was accosted by one of Lobengula's Indunas. 'Ou Tomoson,' he said, 'how have you treated us, after all your promises, which we believed?'

I had no answer.

Chapter XI

CECIL RHODES

MY reason for devoting a chapter to Cecil Rhodes is that I can write of him from intimate knowledge. Several biographies have been written, but for his early life, and indeed his essential character, the authors have had to cull much from newspapers and ill-informed people. I can truly say, on the contrary, that over long periods no man lived in closer communion with Rhodes than I did. I knew the inner workings of most of his political schemes.

Rhodes had no blue blood in his veins. His father was a clergyman of the Church of England, but this does not necessarily carry the stamp of aristocracy. He sprang from the yeoman class. His great-grandfather was born in Yorkshire, but he had a Semitic strain, and he told me that one of his ancestors came from Southern Europe. He was proud of the origin of his name in the Island of Rhodes. He numbered brickmakers and small farmers among his immediate ancestors, but he had several uncles with the blood of adventure in their veins. One of them migrated to America and married an Indian woman. Rhodes himself hated the restraints of civilization, and he said to me that some of his happiest days were when he lived in Natal among the Zulus. He was a primitive man of simple tastes, and preferred a chop cooked on the veld to a recherché dinner. Away from civilization he was like an overgrown schoolboy.

When he landed in Africa in 1870 he came for reasons of health only, for although big in frame, standing over six feet, he was a delicate youth. It was due to the dryness of Kimberley that he was able to throw off his consumptive tendencies. He was a good, quiet, moral boy, who had intended taking holy orders. Some have stated that Rhodes, at the age of sixteen, worked for a jeweller named Streeter in London. I can hardly credit this statement, and he certainly never mentioned it to me.

He landed first in Natal. He was persuaded by his elder brother Herbert, who was then in the neighbourhood of Delagoa Bay, to accompany him into Secoconi's country in the Northern Transvaal. They had heard that Secoconi had accumulated a parcel of diamonds, acquired by members of the tribe when

working for white men; and their plan was to trade guns for these diamonds. Cecil was to collect a few guns in Natal, and his brother was to do the same on the Portuguese side of the border. Herbert obtained two brass cannon from the Portuguese. They joined forces, but in attempting to barter for the diamonds they were discovered by the Transvaal Boers, and hastily made their escape. They dumped the cannon over a high precipice in an inaccessible spot. The cannon were discovered in 1890 in the Northern Transvaal, and were then said to have belonged to some ancient Portuguese fort. They were in fact, however, the identical cannon the brothers had attempted to sell to Secoconi.

Rhodes and his brother were contravening no statutory law in supplying natives with guns, for at this time there were many stores openly selling thousands of guns and powder and caps. I do not think there is the slightest chance that this statement will be questioned. Today there are many worthy people in Natal, the Transvaal and Cape Province who participated in this traffic. The trade in diamonds was also free in those days, and a man could have walked about the streets with his pockets full of diamonds without any question of illegality. The Illicit Diamond Buying Act and its severe penalties came into force years afterwards. Any native might produce a diamond and buy a gun, but heaven help him if his master caught him. There was one famous case of a digger at Kimberley who put a native over a cask and whipped him to death in the market square for such an offence. The other diggers, however, did not agree with carrying punishment as far as this and the digger forfeited their sympathy.

After the failure of his gun-running venture Herbert made his way back to Lourenço Marques and subsequently to 'Mzila's country, a little farther north, where a year or two afterwards he was burnt to death in his hut.

Cecil turned his steps back to Natal and tried his hand at cotton planting, but for want of capital and experience he failed. When in Natal he met his lifelong associate, Charles Dunell Rudd, whose promising career at Cambridge had been terminated by a breakdown in health. Rudd was then working for John Dunn, a Scots solicitor who had become, in effect, a Zulu chief. From that date Rudd was intimately associated with Rhodes in all his ventures, and in later years their names became almost synonymous. Rhodes placed the greatest reliance in his friend. Rudd, indeed, was a great man. He was never known to be connected with a crooked deal. He was able, honest, good-tempered and clean-living; a man of whom his descendants may well be proud.

Rhodes often lost his temper with him, but was always met with imperturbable good humour, and always apologized.

Rhodes decided to try his luck on the then recently discovered Diamond Fields. He arrived in Kimberley in very low financial circumstances, but claims could be obtained and pegged without much capital, beyond enough to buy a pick and shovel. Rudd, whose finances were in the same plight, joined him there. As a third they fell in with William Alderson, an Australian. Of the three, Alderson was the practical man, although of a different type. On finding themselves almost entirely without funds, Alderson suggested that he should take care of their claims while Rhodes and Rudd went to town to earn a few shillings to pay the two natives they employed. The mining laws on the Diamond Fields, instituted by the diggers themselves, compelled a digger to do some work on his claim each day, for unworked claims could legally be regarded as derelict.

Alderson suggested that they should amalgamate their three claims, not indeed to control prices, but to curtail and centralize expense. He maintained that the three claims could be run at the cost of one. Thus from Alderson Rhodes got his first idea of the giant amalgamation of interests, a principle on which he worked for the rest of his life.

It was at this time or a little later that Rhodes, Fred de Pass, S. A. Phillips, Dunsmuir and Rudd lived together in Kimberley and occupied what was then known as the Compound.

The first venture of Rhodes and Rudd to raise cash was to try their hand at making and selling ice-cream. You are to imagine the great Cecil Rhodes standing behind a white cotton blanket, slung across a tent, turning a handle of a bucket ice-cream machine, and passing the finished article to Rudd to sell from a packing-case at one of the corners of the Diamond Market. The ice-cream was retailed at sixpence a wine-glass full, with an extra sixpence for a slab of cake. The cake was supplied by Major Wallace. One of their most reliable customers was Barney Barnato.

This venture did bring in cash, but hardly enough to satisfy Rhodes. But now, presuming that he knew something of machinery—having turned the handle of an ice-cream bucket—he hit upon the plan of tendering for a contract for the De Beers Mining Board to pump a mine dry. The three partners went into this scheme jointly, Rudd having managed to interest Tarry and Co., a firm dealing in machinery. Tarry and Co. agreed to supply pumps and engines on credit for a third share of the profits, which were to come out of the £18,000 at which Rhodes tendered

for the work. The only engine available, however, was a second-hand one lying outside Beaufort West, three hundred miles south of Kimberley. There were no trains to the Diamond Fields in those days, and so Rudd and Rhodes travelled to Beaufort West by waggon and hired a span of donkeys to drag the engine to Kimberley. They took six weeks on the journey. Rhodes secured the services of a Scotsman named McWilliams, a blacksmith and mechanic, who never ceased to be employed by Rudd in his prosperity. The pumps were erected and they all took turns down the mine, each doing his eight hours' shift as engine driver. On one occasion Rhodes, dreaming, allowed the water to boil out, and in his hurry turned on the cold water, thus blowing out the fire boxes. After two or three days of satisfactory work, McWilliams asked Rhodes if any provision had been made in the contract for the possibility of springs being discovered at the bottom of the mine after the pressure of water had been removed. Rhodes, never ignoring a suggestion of this kind, immediately interviewed the Diggers' Committee. The water was then measured, but Rhodes insisted upon the contract being amended to guard against any such eventuality. As things turned out, this was indeed a lucky move, for when they got to low-water line McWilliams's suspicion of a spring was verified. The contract was safe, however, and the £18,000 was duly paid. The profits were divided between the partners, Rhodes netting the lion's share.

At about this time a great scare had taken place on the Diamond Fields. Down to about eight feet in the mines all work was done in what was known as the yellow ground. Below this was found a hard blue substance. The diggers who struck it first and found it impenetrable immediately covered it up, fearing that they had struck rock bottom, and offered their claims for sale. Rhodes and Rudd, although not geologists, agreed that if the mines of De Beers were craters, the diamonds must continue. The blue ground, which at first sight was thought to be hard rock, turned out to be compressed blue mud which slowly pulverized on exposure to the air.

Rhodes now suggested that Rudd should put the £2000 he had made on the pumping contract, with Rhodes's £3000 into a scheme to buy up all the claims that were being offered. Rudd, however, was married and had two children, and Mrs. Rudd did not wish him to risk so large a sum. Rhodes overcame her opposition, and with his talent for compromise prevailed upon her to allow him to use £1000. Thus with £4000 Rhodes and Rudd began to buy up a few of the claims designated as bed-rock at

prices varying from £50 to £150, according to position. This was the genesis of the now famous De Beers Diamond Company, with a capital of £40,000,000. Thus far Rhodes had secured only the De Beers Mine, one of the five that later constituted the De Beers Consolidated Company.

It was not long before Rhodes realized that he had at this stage to deal with more astute brains, and with men of a different calibre from that of the average digger. Being always quick to appreciate and spy out intelligence, he singled out a young German Jew, Alfred Beit, who had been working as a clerk in Kimberley. Besides possessing a keen brain, Beit was what Rhodes chose to call 'uniquely straight and honest.' This estimate of Beit I fully endorse. The combination of Rhodes and Beit mastered the controllers of the other mines, of whom the chief was Barney Isaacs, later known as Barney Barnato. The purchase price of these mines was fixed at above £1,000,000 in shares. It was only paper that Rhodes and Beit were dealing in, although for this paper the banks were ever ready to hand out cash. Barnato suggested three conditions to Rhodes: he must be made life governor of the De Beers Consolidated Mines, a member of the Cape Parliament, and a member of the Kimberley Club. Rhodes replied, 'I agree to the first condition because you have a million interest in the mines; I agree to the second because it is fitting that with a million at stake in the country you should have a just ambition to be in the councils of the country; but I shall have to see about the third.' Never lacking agents, secret and other, Rhodes enlisted the sympathy of Leopold Hertz, one of the leading citizens, and after much effort Barnato became a member of the Kimberley Club.

Rhodes was now in entire control of the diamond mines. One of his well-known beliefs was that as long as there were men and sweethearts diamonds would be in demand. He worked on the basis, however, that if four men wanted diamonds he would produce only enough for two.

During all these undertakings Rhodes had been aiming at getting into Parliament. These were the days before the secret ballot, when you could buy and sell votes as you wished. Rhodes elected to stand for Klipdrift, now Barkly West, the original seat of the Griqualand West Government. Natives were then allowed the vote with merely nominal qualifications, and constituted what was called the 'blanket vote', meaning voters who were dressed only in blankets. In this election Rhodes was opposed by Dr. Murphy, and the deciding factor was my mustering two hundred

and fifty natives and taking them to the poll to vote as I suggested. Murphy was a strong candidate, and without my natives Rhodes would probably not have won.

Rhodes's dream had begun to take shape even then, and in 1881 a league was formed in Grahamstown by himself and a number of good patriots, Francis Newton, Sydney Shippard, Hercules Robinson and others. The object was to protect and strengthen Imperial interests in South Africa. This was Rhodes's first tentative effort as an Empire builder. He now began to talk and dream of Federation. He set himself the task of first federating the different states of Africa under the aegis of the British Empire. The Orange Free State was quite willing to come into such a scheme and agreed, as a first step, to a customs union. The Transvaal under President Burgers, and subsequently under Kruger, was not enamoured of Rhodes's idea, and preferred to develop as a separate entity on their own lines. Rhodes, when the attitude of the Transvaal was clear, set himself to hem in the Transvaal and prevent the Republic's spreading to the north or east and thus obtaining seaports. The east coast then lay open to Paul Kruger's ambitions, but before he could secure a port Rhodes induced the British Government to proclaim the coast British up to Portuguese East Africa. At about this time the Vryheid Republic had come into existence under General Lucas Meyer. In reality it was an attempt to secure the country for the Boers down to the east coast and obtain a port at St. Lucia Bay. The plan was frustrated, and eventually the Vryheid Republic became part of Natal.

In the west the Transvaal Boers, repeating what Lucas Meyer had done, annexed the territory adjoining German South-West Africa and formed the Stellaland Republic. I have told elsewhere of the part Rhodes played there and of his subsequent dealings with the Goshen Republic, and of the final annexation of Bechuanaland in 1885, Thus his route to the north was almost secured.

Kruger, frustrated in the east as he had been in the west, now sought an opening in the north, and directed all his energy to this end. Shippard, of the Imperial League, was now administrator of Bechuanaland and, understanding Rhodes's policy very well, kept an alert eye on things in the north. It came to Rhodes's ears that the Transvaal was seeking an agreement with Lobengula, King of the Matebili and Mashona, in what is now known as Rhodesia. It fell to my lot to find among Lobengula's papers a letter written to him by General Joubert and carried to Matebili-

land by the Boer emissary, Grobler, In this letter the following passage occurred: 'When an Englishman once has your property in his hands, then he is like a monkey that has its hands full of pumpkin seeds—if you don't beat him to death, he will never let go . . . if I may live so long, and the country has become altogether settled and the stink which the English brought is first blown away altogether, then I will ride so far as to reach Lobengula.'

Khama, King of the Bechuana, whose country Grobler had to pass through, sent down a posse of fighting men to the Crocodile River to prevent his doing so. After warning Grobler not to come on, and his still persisting, a fight ensued in which Grobler and Greef were wounded, and another was killed. Grobler died later of his wound. This affair caused a tremendous sensation and bitter recriminations. Eventually Khama had to pay £1000 to Grobler's widow and the matter was thus officially settled.

Rhodes in his early days had contrived to sandwich in a sufficient number of terms at Oxford to obtain a degree. This was done by scampering off to England at any time available, and his terms were never kept consecutively. He made many friends at Oxford. He was much older than the average undergraduate and associated closely with the Dons.

At one time he was Colonel of the Diamond Fields Horse. It fell to his lot to command the regiment when an inspection was held by the High Commissioner and Commander-in-Chief, Lord Loch. Major Sapte, the Governor's A.D.C., was called upon to put Rhodes through his paces for a day or two. At the appointed time, when he drove up to take his place at the head of the regiment on the Kimberley Market Square, it was noticed that he was wearing his scarf over the wrong shoulder. This had to be put right on parade. After the Governor had taken the salute Rhodes walked up to the carriage where Lady Loch was seated with her attendant ladies, and in his anxiety to do the correct thing he tried to take his helmet off. Fortunately it had a chain under the chin, and Sapte stopped him just in time. There was a general titter from the ranks. Rhodes never put on the uniform again. He once said, however, that he would have been glad to have been wearing uniform at a certain official party in Basutoland, for in his civilian clothes he had received hardly any attention.

On one occasion Rhodes went with Captain (later Sir Charles) Warren on an expedition against the Korannas at Mammusa. A small brush took place and a man named O'Reilly was hit in the stomach. Rhodes got the shock of his life. He turned round

and said, 'Fancy! That might easily have been my stomach instead of his.'

These two instances were, I think, the full extent of his life as a soldier. He genuinely felt that he was destined to do a great work, and felt it was foolish to run unnecessary risks.

If I were asked what was the greatest ideal in Rhodes's life I should say the federation of the British Empire. He did not think of federation only in Africa. When Australia was in banking difficulties he cabled offering the credit of Cape Colony to help them out of their troubles. The £10,000 given to Parnell for the Irish Party was part of the same policy. Although it insured a sympathetic attitude when the question of the Charter was raised, it was not offered, as some have suggested, to assist the granting of the Charter but to gain Parnell's ear on the point that in the event of Home Rule becoming law the Irish should continue to send representatives to the Parliament at Westminster. Rhodes, as I always understood him, was working for what has now come about, a United Empire based on the independence and free will of its parts. He used a different terminology, but that was his idea.

When Egypt was taken under a protectorate he gave £5000 to the Liberal Party to support his point of view that Egypt for all time should be held by Britain to safeguard the Cape to Cairo railway route. He related to me how he had gone to Berlin to obtain from the Kaiser the right of way through German territory to avoid, if possible, the two hundred and fifty miles across Lake Tanganyika.

He lived and dreamed Federation. As he grew older, however, and he felt that his days were growing short, he decided to use the disastrous 'hot house' process in South Africa to force the pace. This process, which culminated in the Jameson Raid, spelt the breaking-up of a useful man and life.

In about 1895 Rhodes applied to the British Government for the right to place a posse of Rhodesian police in a small strip of territory named Pitsani Potlogo, near the Transvaal border. Ostensibly the police were there to guard the building of the railway into the interior, but in reality the place was to be used as a jumping-off ground into the Transvaal. Let me now clearly emphasize that in this matter the Imperial Government, while knowing that things were unsatisfactory in the Transvaal, was hoodwinked by Rhodes on the real reason for these guards being on the border. Rhodes had seen a chance in the fact that in Johannesburg the British element had a political grievance—

taxation without representation—and a whole series of more realistic grievances.

It is beyond question that Kruger had supplied the Uitlanders with plenty of sticks to beat him, and had made it easy to build up a case against him. Nevertheless, Jameson's action was not part of Rhodes's scheme. I positively affirm that it was not. Rhodes's plan was that Jameson *should await an outbreak of violence in Johannesburg, and stand ready to march in to restore order, but to move only when he could do so with the sanction of the Cape and Imperial Governments.* The Convention of 1881 stipulated that either Dutch or British could be called upon at need to help to keep the peace, and it was upon this strictly legal ground that Rhodes took his stand. He had been led to believe that revolution and bloodshed were imminent in Johannesburg, but not until this had happened was Jameson to move. Rhodes's aim was obvious—to bring the Transvaal into the Federated States of South Africa. He had no other object. One of his plans was to take Paul Kruger prisoner. Thus while the Raid certainly resulted from the risks Rhodes had run, he was not responsible for the actual incursion, or for the crass stupidity of the whole tragic affair.

It was an unfortunate day for Rhodes when he met Jameson, a man of no real judgment. Rhodes was a curious mixture, and Jameson approached from his blind side—that constant fretting about his health. For notwithstanding his immense energy, Rhodes was never strong. He worried about his health so much as sometimes to impart an impression of cowardice. He was haunted by the fear of death, the early death that came to him. Jameson was above the average in medical skill, and these attainments became the basis of his association with Rhodes. Jameson has been called Rhodes's friend, but as a fact Rhodes never had a friend in the rich or inner meaning of the word. His friendship was often calculated in pounds, shillings and pence. Jameson was useful to him, in the same way as many of his human attachments. His human sentiment at all times was subordinate to his vast ambition. But with all his faults Rhodes was a man in the truest sense of the word. I never knew him to go back on a promise. Jameson, on the contrary, was a man who did not always intend to stand by his word. It is customary when a man is dead to say nothing but good of him, but this may be carried too far. I am bent upon relating the truth as I knew it.

I was at Groot Schuur day and night from the Saturday on which Jameson cut the telegraph wire preparatory to starting on the Raid, until the following Wednesday. Rhodes was stupefied

at the news. In fact he was so unnerved that I was afraid of what might happen. There were two men staying at Groot Schuur at the time of the Raid, Penfold and Metcalfe, but at first they did not see Rhodes. The men who spoke to him at that time, besides myself were W. P. Schreiner,[1] the Archbishop of Capetown (West Jones), and Alfred Beit. He refused to face Rudd, his partner, with whom he had been most intimately associated for nearly twenty-five years. I made every effort to bring them together, but without success. Finally, Rudd, who was then living at Fernwood, Newlands, asked me to try to get some sort of settlement with Rhodes to cancel the power of attorney in Johannesburg held by Rhodes's brother Frank. Rudd, as managing director of the Gold Fields Consolidated, felt keenly responsible to the shareholders and feared that Paul Kruger, in his despotic way, would confiscate the corporation's properties. At last, late one afternoon, I got the assurance from Rhodes that he had cancelled Frank's power of attorney. I carried the information to Rudd at night on horseback.

When I saw Rhodes first, the news about Jameson had just come to him, I found him in his bedroom, sitting on the edge of the bed with an open telegram in his hand. Alfred Beit was walking up and down the room like a madman clutching a bottle of antipyrin. Rhodes's voice greeted me as I entered: 'Look, Thompson, look what that damn fool Jameson has done! Why did he do it? Tell me, Thompson, why did he do it?'

The sharp falsetto voice went on, over and over again: 'But tell me, why did he do it?'

A discussion arose on the position of affairs on the Rand. It was feared that, with the probable imprisonment of Frank Rhodes and the Directors of the Gold Fields, and if nobody was left in charge, Rudd's foreboding of confiscation would be realized. It was wellnigh impossible to find anybody intimately acquainted with the situation who was not in some way implicated in the Raid. I had absolutely no connection with the Rand, and Rhodes and Beit decided that I should go by that evening's train to Johannesburg to be ready to take charge if necessary.

I hastened downstairs and told my two little sons, who were waiting for me in my dogcart, to drive home at once and tell their mother of my impending departure, and see that my bag was packed. As the horses swung round the drive I saw a telegraph boy approaching. He carried a telegram for Rhodes telling him

[1] Afterwards Prime Minister of Cape Colony, and brother of the famous writer Olive Schreiner.

that Otto Beit was still at liberty, and that for the moment the mines were in no danger.

A small event some years later throws light on the character of Alfred Beit. I met him in London on the Stock Exchange and he called me aside. 'Thompson,' he said; 'I never forget a service. For some time I have wished to make some return to you for the way in which you were ready to step into the breach at a moment that might well have proved awkward for you in many ways. I suggest that you buy this parcel of shares from me and sell them again within twenty-four hours: I took him at his word and gained several hundred pounds.

On the Saturday afternoon after the Raid Jan Hofmeyr, by appointment, met Rhodes at *Sans Souci*, Tom Louw's house at Newlands. Hofmeyr offered to continue working with Rhodes if he could be assured that Rhodes had not been a party to the Raid. The Duke of Fife, Chairman of the Chartered Company, cabled to Rhodes asking if he had been in any way connected with the Raid, and offering, if Rhodes could answer in the negative, to stand by him to the end.

Rhodes gave the same answer to both questions—he took full responsibility for the Jameson Raid. In all the circumstances, and acting on impulse as he did, he could not well have done otherwise, for the instrument that had broken in his hand was his own instrument. But he gave himself no time for reflection, and in his condition of intense excitement he was almost incapable of it. The letter supposed to have been written and signed by C. J. Rhodes was actually written by Dr. Rutherfoord Harris, another henchman ever ready to play the scapegoat.

Up to the time of the Jameson Raid Rhodes may be said to have had the broad support of the British people in all he did, and to have been regarded as one of England's greatest men. After the Raid his fame and power died. On his first visit to England after the Raid he went through London and not a single soul offered him the hand of friendship. He felt it very much. He stayed only about a week, leaving for Africa via Brindisi. The ship in which he was travelling stuck in the Suez Canal. On arriving in Matebililand, via Beira, he received a letter from his brother Frank containing this message: 'You must do something to rehabilitate yourself in the eyes of the world, even if it is only a wound in the bottom.' The trip to Matebililand, and the dramatic meeting with the chiefs—a much dramatized event—undoubtedity did rehabilitate him to some extent in the eyes of the British public, but he never recovered from the

shock of the Raid, the ruin of his plans, and the mortal blow to his vanity.

Rhodes I describe in sum as an extraordinary man. He was not a scholarly man, for although well informed on most subjects he never had sufficient patience for intensive study. He hardly ever read a book right through. He often asked others to read books and write summaries. Of the books that interested him most he retained these summaries and had them typewritten. He maintained that he had no time to wade through books that were full of padding. He was always looking for the practical in life. He had, indeed, an unrivalled genius for grasping essentials and leaving details to hirelings. I have known him to suggest the broad principles of a measure, and add that he did not pretend to know how it was to be done; somebody else must work it out. He concerned himself only with essentials and with results. He never for one moment spelt failure. He bought the brains of the very best men to carry out his schemes. He generally paid four times as much as anybody else would think of paying.

One of his sayings when working with white labour was, 'Throw blood to the hounds; they have a right to some of the profit.' He always acted up to this, and to the end of his life never had trouble with his workers. When he discovered a man to be useless he sacked him without ceremony. He used some of the most honest men, some of the greatest scoundrels, and some of the crassest fools. He always respected the honest man, hated the scoundrel, loathed the fool; but in turn he used each to his own advantage. He often said, 'To deal with a rogue is better than to deal with an honest fool.' All who worked with him knew that he could not brook opposition, and least of all from any member of his Board of Directors. He required them only to sign cheques, unanimously support his schemes, and *pro forma* second his propositions. In politics he was much the same. He would say that he had thought things out and did not wish to be worried by discussions.

Two of his cables that I saw were charateristic. One was in answer to the Duke of Fife, who recommended a certain policy in regard to the Chartered Company: 'Do you expect me to make bricks without straw?' The second cable related to a five years' contract for sales of diamonds to the Diamond Syndicate, involving £25,000,000. The question hinged on £5000 and Rhodes cabled: 'I thought I was dealing with diamond merchants, not retail grocers.'

He had no place in his heart for petty men. On one occasion

when somebody began to tell him about a political scandal he exclaimed, 'I don't want to discuss pigsty politics.' The allusion was to a notorious contract for railway refreshment rooms in which a colleague was interested.

No deeper schemer ever lived in South Africa, but he was not rightly understood. I heard men who had worked for him and eaten his salt deride him, calling him unscrupulous, without soul or feeling. I admit that to many this impression may have seemed justified; but it often transpired that those who talked in this strain had been disappointed, or had tried to get something out of Rhodes and failed. He could see through these gentlemen, but was always able to treat them civilly.

There is one episode in his career which although known to many has often been forgotten. It was characteristic. It will be remembered that we had undertaken to supply Lobengula with a thousand Martini rifles and a hundred thousand ball cartridges. Rhodes, always prepared for rebuffs, ordered double the quantity in two lots, saying, 'If we can't smuggle them through Capetown we must smuggle them through Portuguese Angola on the West Coast.' It so happened that we managed, by much manipulation, to get the rifles through Capetown. Three months later the second thousand rifles arrived and so it was arranged that they should be thrown overboard before the ship entered harbour. The first consignment had created such a stir that to import the second would have been fatal. But before the ship arrived Rhodes hit upon the plan of buying a ship, and to this end sent Mr. William Searle, of Port Elizabeth, to buy the *Countess of Carnarvon*, a small steamer, for £10,000. It was brought round to Capetown and the second consignment of rifles was trans-shipped to it. The ship was then manned and provisoned, and instructions given that it should sail up the coast, avoiding Port Elizabeth, East London and Durban, and make direct for the Pungwe River in Mozambique. A message was then sent overland to Gungunyana, a powerful chief in Portuguese East Africa, telling him that we were sending him by steamer a thousand rifles and a hundred thousand ball cartridges as a present, and that he should send to the banks of the river to receive them.

Ten days after leaving Table Bay the *Countess of Carnarvon* sailed up the Pungwe, but instead of finding a crowd of native warriors she discovered a Portuguese gunboat with guns trained full on her. Only half the rifles had been dumped overboard when captain and crew were forced to abandon ship and get away as best they could on the northern bank. The *Countess of Carnarvon* was then

manned by an alien crew, and sailed under escort of the gunboat. She was given another name and continued to run between Beira and Lourenço Marques as a cargo vessel.

Two months later the Portuguese attacked the natives and killed a great many of them. The chief Gungunyana was taken to one of the islands of the Azores with three of his wives and one or two servants. There he died many years later.

Thus ended another episode formulated by Cecil Rhodes. Again, his hot-house process! Rhodes could not wait. He always said that if the Imperial Government had been worth its salt it would have exercised its option and bought Delagoa Bay and the hinterland while the right of pre-emption still existed.

When Rhodes said, 'Every man has his price,' he did not mean that every man could be bought with money, although he was sometimes able to buy off opposition. He more often said, 'Tell me a man's ambitions and I will tell you how to square him.' He practised this policy and had a wonderful faculty for getting men to help him. There were exceptions, however, when he received rebuffs. Lawley, who afterwards became Governor of the Transvaal, was an instance. Colquhoun, at one time Administrator of Rhodesia, was another. John Hays Hammond, the American engineer, was a third. Hammond could never be induced to give more than a very guarded opinion about the gold resources of Rhodesia; he would say only that Rhodesia was 'mineralized'. It was, I think, because of their opposition that Rhodes deeply respected and appreciated these three men.

Rhodes was a great believer in sobriety. Up to the age of forty he never took liquor between meals. Up to thirty he drank no liquor at all. After the Jameson Raid, when his heart began to fail, he was perhaps not always as sober as he might have been. In a letter to me at the time the Chartered Company was formed he wrote, 'Tell Helm the Charter specially excludes drink from the Interior.'

Rhodes, contrary to popular belief, was essentially a religious man, although he did not often go to church. He believed in the equality of men in religion, and condemned religious practice that recognized class distinctions. He knew the Bible more thoroughly than most men. He told me that at the age of seventeen he had taken first place in an examination in Biblical knowledge. This was apart from his divinity studies at Oxford, where he studied the Gospels before he got his degree in later years. On his arrival in South Africa in 1870 his general scholastic attainments were limited to the Senior Cambridge.

Often I rode with him on the slopes of Table Mountain and often we rested where his great monument now stands. On one such occasion Rhodes pointed to the cemetery at Mowbray and said, 'Thompson, look at those white tombs. Do you think that is the end of us?' I waited for him to answer his own question and he went on, 'No, that is not the end of man. Men talk of Evolution, some call it Nature, I call it God. No one will ever make me believe that death ends all. If you take belief in the Resurrection away from me I have nothing left.'

He always avoided flippant discussions of religious matters. On the Sunday after the Raid, when the Archbishop of Capetown consoled him in his room, and speaking to him of the Creator begged him not to give up—for it was feared he might destroy himself—he was deeply moved, and for at least that day seemed relieved.

I never heard Rhodes discuss women in a vulgar manner. I spent days and nights with him in the veld and never heard him once utter a coarse or vulgar word. I remember Alfred Beit once making a rather broad jest. Rhodes's jaws clenched like a vice, and Beit never did it again, intimate friend as he was. Rhodes's detractors have charged him with being a man of loose morals, but I never knew of anything to support such notions. No man ever lived in a fiercer light of publicity, and there was never a scandal till the unfortunate Radziwill affair, in which I can vouch he was as innocent as a babe. I was closely associated with him at the time. She did her best to get him into her clutches, but she failed. When suffering from what proved to be his last illness he came out from England to give evidence in court against her to vindicate his own character.

It has been declared that Rhodes said on his deathbed, 'So much to do, so little done.' I was in England when he died, but to me these words sound utterly unlike him. I think them so unlike him that I do not believe he said them. Rhodes was no poet, and when fighting death, of which he was always so afraid, he was in no mood to declaim on 'the might have been'.

He left nearly all his wealth for the public good, and expressly provided that no idlers should inherit from him. Although it may not have been attended by the success deserved, it was a noble idea to attempt through the medium of scholarships and college life to bring all nations together in better understanding. Except for a few thousands left to his brother Frank, and £300 a year to his sister, and some legacies to friends, his wealth was bequeathed to the South African people. All know how much South Africa owes to the Rhodes Trust.

Chapter XII

'SUNSET AND EVENING STAR'

UNDER the guidance of Rudd I secured my due portion of shares in the Chartered Company. With the help of Rudd's brother on the London Stock Exchange I sold them at the right time. Without the kind help of these two utterly honest men I might easily have lost a great deal in the scramble. As it was I realized a substantial sum. This fortune opened new vistas to me, including Oxford, and was, I suppose, the fundamental reason why I refused Rhodes's request to remain in Matebililand. It made a sharp contrast to the life in a raw country that my wife would have been exposed to, and consideration for her feelings weighed a great deal. In the light of history the decision I made, now that I look back on it in my old age, seems to have been wrong, and an evil one for the Matebili. But I was young, I had just made a fortune, I had parliamentary ambitions in Cape Colony, I was not conceited enough to assume that I could make any difference to Matebililand, and so I ran counter to Rhodes's wish. On the other hand, I may have been right. I, and I think Rhodes also, had regarded the Concession, the Charter, and the opening up of Matebililand in a highly altruistic light that might not have survived events, and the many influences brought to bear. It is idle to criticize now, but situations developed which were contrary to the spirit in which I had regarded the whole thing, and situations I should not have been able to accept.

A short time after my return to the Cape I went to dinner at Government House. The talk was all of Matebililand and the new Chartered Company, and the Governor begged me to tell my adventures to his guests. When I had finished he said, 'We are not going to call you Thompson any more, but Matebili.' The soubriquet was laughingly taken up, and since then I have been known as Matebili Thompson.

A few months after I left Matebililand I set out for England. First I bought a house, Clay Hall, at Great Clacton in Essex, and then I entered Keble College. My experiences as an old and much married undergraduate were amusing. I was promply named 'Grandpa', and in many slightly unauthorized situations

was mistaken by the proctors as being somebody in authority. One day I was solemnly called up and accused of the misdemeanour of driving tandem down the 'High' with a strange young woman sitting beside me in the dogcart. Driving tandem was, for some inexplicable reason, considered particularly fast in those days. Secretly I was delighted that my beautiful ponies should have created so much attention, and I was let off when I explained that the good-looking young woman was my wife, who was also at Oxford at the time attending lectures.

When I returned to South Africa a few years later I entered politics under Rhodes's leadership. I thoroughly understood his policy and aims, but I had possibly acquired some of his dogmatic ways and impatience of argument. I was in truth never 'a good party man'. I first entered the Cape Parliament as a member for Mossel Bay and later, in 1898, I defeated Sir Henry Juta in the party nomination for Wynberg and was returned unopposed. I remained the member for Wynberg until 1904, but thereafter a vendetta arising from the attempt to suspend the Constitution barred all constituencies to me.

I was in Parliament at the time of the Jameson Raid, when Rhodes virtually came to the end of his great career. I had helped him with the Glen Grey Act, his first comprehensive essay in native policy, and had arranged a transfer of natives from Fingoland to Rhodesia when labour was scarce. On many matters he consulted me, and although we had many differences of opinion and many heated arguments, I was deeply in his confidence. There was an interlude of a few days when we were not on speaking terms after one such altercation. It came to an end when I received the following note,

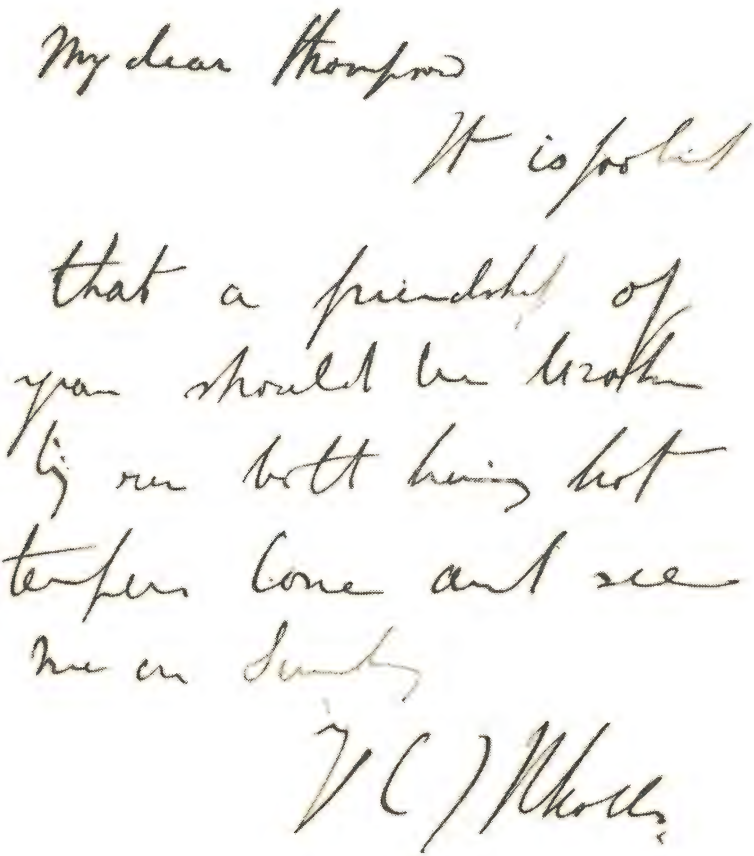
'My dear Thompson,

'It is foolish that a friendship of years should be broken by our both being bad tempered. Come and see me on Sunday.

'Yours,

'C. J. RHODES.'

By temperament I was an independent, as I showed when I resigned the chairmanship of the Rinderpest Commission rather than seem to agree with a mistaken view of the necessary remedies for a great calamity that had befallen the farmers. The next Commission I served on was in 1904 to examine the native problem throughout South Africa.


My dear Thompson

It is [illegible]

that a friendship of

your standing should be broken

by us both having hot

tempers. Come and see

me on Sunday

Yours C J Rhodes

A FACSIMILE OF A NOTE FROM RHODES TO F. R. THOMPSON (PAGE 121)

Shortly before Rhodes died he assented to Sir A. Milner's plan to suspend the Constitution of Cape Colony so that an entirely new constitution could be devised later for the United South Africa that was to emerge from the Boer War. The plan was applauded by the jingoes as a means of overcoming the Dutch. This was one reason for my disliking it, and another was that I thought Milner was by no means sure of his ground, although his intentions were good. He seemed to me overconfident in a country that had already proved too difficult for Rhodes and Kruger, and I could not regard Milner as being better equipped than they were. In opposing the suspension of the Constitution I put myself definitely on the side opposed to the jingo element in South African politics. I felt that although Rhodes had fallen back on the jingoes for support, he was only using them until better times, and I hoped he would eventually win back his old friends Hofmeyr, Schreiner and Merriman and make a new start on the old lines. On his death, however, in March 1902, two months before the Boer War ended, the Suspensionists wrapped themselves in his mantle and all who presumed to controvert them were accused of traducing the memory of Rhodes. Alas, poor Rhodes.

I was in England in 1902, where I represented Cape Colony in the Abbey with Sir Gordon Sprigg, then Prime Minister of the Colony, at King Edward's coronation. Sir Gordon, in speeches in London opposed the suspension of the Constitution, and I assisted him in this campaign. Sprigg's valiant fight for British fair play prevailed and the Suspensionists were defeated. The Union shows the deep debt South Africa owes to him, and to the British Colonials who stood by him in this crisis.

The exploitation of Rhodes's work and memory by the jingoes went to extreme limits. They set up as instructors to all and sundry on what Rhodes had thought, wished and meant. They almost succeeded in passing him off as a jingo, which was, of course, most helpful to their opponents. In thus trying to reduce him to the stature of a party hack they temporarily clouded his fame.

All this surprised me, but I became almost mute with astonishment when they produced Jameson as their leader. With this new party I could have little in common. I twice unsuccessfully opposed them at the polls and then decided to leave politics alone.

I turned my attention then wholly to the further development of my beloved Cornforth Hill. It has been the hobby and abiding joy of my declining years, as it was the inspiration of my youth. Land has always been to me among the first of the things of this

life. It is also I think the safest of all assets. I am glad to know that when my task is done my sons will have this stake in South Africa.

As an old man, in the sunset of a long and varied life, I often look back and then turn my eyes to the future. I have seen many changes and thought many thoughts. In the new South Africa now dawning there must be room for both Boer and Briton. This is, I think, a fact my fellow countrymen of both races sometimes fail to keep in view. The native question still looms on the horizon as the most serious and important problem we have to tackle. It is absolutely essential that the white races should have peace, and stand shoulder to shoulder in order even partly to solve this immense problem. When my son gave his life in 1915 for England I was proud that I had given the very best I had to give.[1] Nevertheless I have every respect for the Boer whose patriotism is only for South Africa, which is the country he can in his heart call his own. Much must be left to time, which brings understanding. When I joined the South African Party I was censured by many friends, who within a few short years were all crying the same way. In 1924 I voted Nationalist, simply because I felt that it was absolutely necessary for the country to have a change from a party that had been so long in power—under one form and another for eighteen years. In voting for General Hertzog I was convinced that his vision of unity was the true one—none other in essence than the idea of unity I had learnt from Cecil Rhodes long, long ago under the stars in Bechuanaland. Rhodes, Hofmeyr, Botha, Hertzog, they had all willynilly to travel the same road towards the unity of the South African people. The two races have to keep in step. All our disasters—the Raid and the South African War among them—came from forgetting or denying this fact in our Providence. The element that regards South Africa as a place in which to make money and then depart no longer counts in the scheme of things. There are two peoples in South Africa from which the united nation must spring—the British Colonial and the old patriotic Boer. Together they have much to give, and I hope they will give it to the British Commonwealth of Nations. From the bottom of my heart I wish them well.

[1] Lieutenant Neville Rudd Thompson, of the 21st Lancers, who was killed in action on the North Western Frontier, India, in 1915.

Francis Robert 'Matebili' Thompson died in the afternoon of May 5, 1927, at Cornforth Hill in his seventieth year. He lies buried there, as he wished, on his own land.

APPENDICES

A. An extract from the diary written by F. R. Thompson's father in 1853, describing a hunting trip in Bechuanaland. p. 127

B. Notes by F. R. Thompson on his meeting in 1920 with the Chief Galishwe, who led the attack on Cornforth Hill on 18th July, 1878. p. 135

C. Copy of the Agreement signed on 8th September, 1884 by Cecil Rhodes and representatives of the Stellaland Republic. p. 136

D. An extract from C. D. Rudd's diary at Bulawayo describing how Lobengula signed the Concession. p. 138

E. Copy of the Matebililand Concession as signed by Lobengula. p. 140

F. Extracts from Thompson's diary at Bulawayo in 1888–9. p. 141

G. Letters written to Thompson at Bulawayo by Dr. Rutherfoord Harris at Capetown in 1889 describing Harris's work in furthering the interests of the Matebililand Concession, and urging Thompson to set Lobengula against the Portuguese. p. 150

H. Extract from letter from Rev. John Moffat to Rutherfoord Harris written at the time of the Indaba before Lotjie's death. p. 156

I. Extract from letter from Dennis Doyle, a member of Dr. Jameson's party at Bulawayo in Oct.,1889 to Rutherfoord Harris. p. 156

J. Copy of appointment of F. R. Thompson as Bishops Commissary. p. 156

APPENDIX A

EXTRACT FROM THE DIARY OF MATEBILI THOMPSON'S FATHER

Thursday, January 21st, 1853.

I left Pietermaritzburg in company of Mr. John McKenzie.[1] Travelled in the direction of the Drakensberg Mountains. Got safely over the first river from P. M.burg, the Umgeni, where we slept that night. Travelled on the whole of the next day and outspanned at six. Inspanned the next day and about twelve a.m. arrived at the next river, Mooi River, which we found flooded. We had to wait at this place, where there is an accommodation house, until about twelve on the Monday morning, when we ventured across with our waggons, the river having considerably abated, though still high.

We came to the Bushman's River, which we got over all right, and slept there that night. The next night we arrived at the large river, the Tugela, which we found flooded owing to rain on the Drakensberg. Three waggons were waiting on the opposite side of the river to get over.

Slept on the banks that night. Went across the river in the ferry boat, a large flat-bottomed boat, as there was a friend living on the opposite bank who kept a store. He was a married man with a wife and family, his name Mr. J. R. M. Watson. He had been from England about three years, and had formerly lived in Liverpool.

We returned about ten o'clock by moonlight to our waggons and came to the conclusion that the best plan would be to get our waggons across on the ferry boat, which we could do by taking them to pieces. This was not so difficult as taking an English waggon to pieces, the plan of an African waggon being expressly designed for such a contingency. The axles have a great deal of play, which makes them run over the stony and uneven roads much more safely. Twelve oxen are generally yoked to the waggon.

Stopped at the Tugela for four or five days to rest our oxen a

[1] Not the famous Rev. John MacKenzie, but a member of the well-known Natal family of that name.

little, which was better than trekking as we had some very wet days. Got our meals with Watson who was extremely kind to us, as well as Mrs. W. Bought half a cow from Watson for food for selves and people. This place is half-way to the Drakensberg from Natal.

Came to the Little Drakensberg, the ugliest place I had seen since I left Pietermaritzburg, it being nothing but large stones, in the middle of the road, standing a foot out of the ground, and covered with smaller loose stones. The poor oxen had no foothold.

Slept on the banks of a smaller river, called the Valsche River, or Fake, in the English language, where we experienced a heavy thunderstorm just after we had outspanned.

After breakfast the next day we passed a peculiar object—a large wall several hundred feet high, and coming almost to a point. It appears from the road to be an immense statue, for you can see the profile of a man's face distinctly. When the Boers left the old Colony some thirty years ago they christened the hill Nelson's Kop *anglice* Nelson's Head, after a man many of them knew in the Colony, who had a very large Roman nose.

A Mr. King travelled with us in McKenzie's waggon from the Tugela, where he is farming, having bought a farm from John George. He had previously been in business as a merchant in Durban, and was going up to the first village in the Sovereignty to make arrangements about a place to commence business again.

One day we had to travel over a large tract of flat country infested with lions. It is dangerous to sleep in their neighbourhood, as on scenting cattle they will come to the waggons during the night, kill one or two and frighten the rest. The cattle may run away for miles, thus incurring loss and delay.

My waggon driver fortunately shot a gnu when we were outspanned at midday. In the afternoon we came on immense herds of game—gnu, hartebeest, blesbok, springbok and quaggas. We must have seen at least ten thousand head of game that afternoon. Although they were frightened at the waggons, they did not fairly bolt off, but kept four hundred and five hundred yards away.

After sunset we arrived at the first house we had seen since the homestead we left in the morning. We were glad to arrive there, because the many dogs on the place kept the lions away. Unless pressed by hunger lions do not visit a Boer's homestead. We sent one of our boys (native servants) up to the house to ask if we might outspan, and as is usual we received permission.

Although asking permission is only a compliment to the Boer, it is always advisable to do so. Sunday being a rest day, we stayed here all day and received some milk. As the people at the homestead had neither coffee, tea nor sugar, we thought it our duty to send up some to the good lady before leaving. It was thankfully received.

We trekked for four days before we reached the homestead of another Dutchman, called Pretorius, or as he was universally called to distinguish him from the numerous other Pretoriuses, Swart Willem Pretorius; or in English, Black William Pretorius. Here we remained a day and a half, and I met a young man I had known in Pietermaritzburg called Rosa, who was married to one of Pretorius's daughters. He is a descendant of an Italian family settled in this country.

After leaving this farm I did not remain with McKenzie for longer than an hour or so, as his course was then for Bloemfontein while mine was northwards. I was going to the capital of the Transvaal Boers, called Mooi River Dorp, as Pretorius had told me that his relation, the headman, had been fighting with the Caffirs not far from where I wished to go to, and it was advisable for me first to learn from the Boers whether it was safe to proceed. After three days I arrived at the town of Mooi River, having crossed that day a large river called the Vaal, or in English the Yellow River, the name having arisen from its dirty yellow colour. On arriving at the town, being nearly dark, I drove to the house of a man called Gibson, whom I had known in Natal. I was gladly and hospitably received. Henderson, from Natal, and Mr. George Bornham I also found here, so that I was quite at home in the outlandish place. There was another Englishman, or I should say an English Africander, born in Capetown, who was making preparations to proceed to the Great Lake Ngami. Henderson and Gibson told me of his plans, but secretly, because if the Boers had been aware of them they would have prevented him. The Boers had just returned from a battle with some Caffirs in the country we should have to go through.

I broached the subject to J. Chapman, the young man who was going to the Lake, and on his advice left Mooi River, and changed my original direction to another tribe of Caffirs, to obtain young heifers. I was then to join him in Kuruman, Mr. Moffat's mission station, and go into the interior with him. I travelled north-west for some days, which was the road for Kuruman.

There are two missionaries living on the station, the oldest established in the country, having been in existence for twenty-

four years. Mr. Moffat is the oldest inhabitant, and his wife is also with him, their family being all married and living elsewhere. Their only son I saw in Harrismith on my entering the Sovereignty. Mr. Moffat is a Scotchman, while his wife comes from York. The other missionary is from the neighbourhood of Manchester. He is also married, and being only about thirty-one has his young family about him. There is also a store established here belonging to a Scotchman, named David Hume, who has been living here for twelve years or so, though latterly he has been mostly in Graham's Town, in the Eastern Province of the Cape of Good Hope. He has, it is said, made with his trading in these parts some ten or twelve thousand pounds sterling.

Two young men called Chapman, the elder being a married man of two years standing, and the other not quite come to years of discretion, the young man's mother also living with them, composed the missionary station when I arrived. Their store, of course, had nothing to do with the Christianizing. The Caffirs all have well-built, commodious houses and outbuildings equal, if not superior, to the houses we have in Natal. There is a fine garden attached to each house, containing all descriptions of fruit, such as apples, oranges, peaches, pears and grapes. So you may imagine I was in very good quarters. All the inhabitants without exception were really hospitable people, a fact greatly valued in an out-of-the-way wilderness of a place. The grape season was then nearly over, but a basket of this fruit was sent daily to the waggons, besides what I was given in the houses.

Mrs. Moffat, whose kindness years cannot efface, kindly sent white bread loaves and fresh butter to my waggon, so that I really felt quite in civilization again. For nearly two months I had been accustomed to nothing but water cakes.

Chapman arrived on horseback four of five hours before his waggons, which turned up at sundown. Two days after my arrival in Kuruman Mr. Donald Campbell, son of Dr. Campbell in Graham's Town, arrived. He also intended going to the Lake. He had been there only the year before, but notwithstanding all the discomforts was determined to make another trip. He informed me that on his last trip he had lost twenty oxen and two horses by tsetse fly, a poisonous fly I shall afterwards describe, and had it not been for his companions he would have been unable to come out. They lent him oxen, though these were also fly-bitten and afterwards died. His companions were named Green, Wilson and Edwards, and another young man whose name I forget.

The Boers had attacked a tribe called the Baquaines, and Schelli, chief of the Caffirs about Kuruman, expected they would be coming to attack him. The name of Shelli's tribe is the Batlapine. Gasibonae is the paramount chief but his uncle, Mahura, had charge of the territory in which we were, and had more men. As the Caffirs expected the Boers to attack them they would not allow us to go on, and Mahura gave orders that any of his people who accompanied us would forfeit their property.

We were detained for nearly a month, and then decided to go on with the natives we had brought to Kuruman with us. On the morning of May 2nd, 1853, we bade adieu to Kuruman, and the next morning reached a French missionary station called Mateton, inhabited by two French missionaries, both married men. One, a Monsieur Frideux, is married to one of Mr. Moffat's daughters, and the other married a French lady before leaving Europe. This was the last habitation of white people we came to.

We had not left it more than one hour when nine men galloped up on horseback. All were armed with guns. They told us that Mahura had ordered that no Englishmen were to go to the Lake this season. We imagined this order to be their own composition, but for safety's sake we agreed to wait until the next day when, as they said, a messenger would arrive. We waited until 2 p.m. next day but no messenger came, and so we prevailed upon the Caffirs to allow us to proceed. We trekked hard until 8 p.m. and arrived at a spring pond called in the native tongue Choi, or in English, salt. To prevent the Caffirs again overtaking us we trekked on by moonlight. We lost our road in the early part of the night, but shortly afterwards found the path and at sunrise reached a large rain-water pond called Clayton's Fley. An American named Clayton had stayed here some years before to catch giraffes.

We arrived at the town of a tribe called Manketse, Chief Sentube, where we were hospitably received. We found them great beggars. The Chief asked us to go up to his kraal. Chapman and I found His Majesty sitting under his 'Tree'. The Bechuana always look out for a large tree near which to build their chief's kraal, as it is convenient during their parliamentary meetings in protecting them from the sun. Sentube was sitting upon a small stool under this tree, surrounded by his people. A piece of boiled beef was brought to him in a small tin dish. He had also acquired an old knife and fork. He invited us to partake of the feast, cutting off a piece and handing it to us on the fork, but helping himself

first. It was the best piece of meat I have ever tasted, a piece from the breast. This is the Bechuana chiefs' choice dish, while the Zoolo chiefs' is part of the ribs.

The Boers had attacked this chief only two or three months before and had burnt his old town. The present town is built amongst large rugged rocks. It was as much as one could do to reach the huts.

Chapman and I next day saddled up our horses and took our guns, intending to shoot game and look for the road. We fell in with a few red buck and hartebeest, but were not fortunate enough to get any. Chapman afterwards shot a stembuck a little before sunset. The waggons being behind we off-saddled, and after I had collected wood to make a fire we heard the clap of the waggon whips. We climbed up a coppy, and on looking round Chapman called out, 'There's a lion creeping up to the horses.' We ran down to the horses and drove them close to the hill. fastening them together by their necks. We then jumped on a large stone near them, having decided that we should give the lion a shot. I had fired all my shots with the exception of one, which was in my gun, but Chapman had both his barrels loaded. We therefore fixed that he should fire first, and if the lion came on we should each have another shot to give him. Chapman fired, after which the lion made off and we saw no more of him; though I think, from the sound of the bullet clap, he must have been hit.

The next day Chapman got a shot at a red buck, and immediately afterwards a large bull giraffe passed me at about two hundred yards. I gave chase but unfortunately I was on the slowest horse of the lot and could not come near him. I had to jump off and take aim at him, which I did twice at about fifty or sixty yards. Both barrels missed fire, the caps having got wet with the damp during the night, at which I was very much annoyed. It was well that we did not fall in with the lion again, as I should have been in a fix if we had found him and my gun missed fire.

About an hour after dark came to the Baquaine village. The Chief Schelli, however, was not at home, he having passed through Kuruman about three months before on his way to Capetown to see the Governor and ask if the English Government could not obtain for him some redress from the Boers. The Boers, at the time they fought Schelli, had taken a hundred prisoners, women and children, whom they had taken and set to work as slaves; buying them and selling them amongst themselves, quite similar to the way slaves are bought and sold in all slave countries.

Stayed at the village all next day. Kosa Linsy, Schelli's brother, was acting as regent during his absence and he was very civil to us. In fact, this tribe has always been particularly civil to the English who pass through their territory, giving them guides, who remain with them until their return through the Baquaine country.

One of our boys had to remain behind after we left, and at three o'clock he brought the intelligence that two Boer waggons and oxen, besides two or three guns, had been brought into Schelli's town. A party of the tribe had been out on a foray near the border of the country inhabited by the Boers, and had fallen in with their waggons, attended by a party of seven young Boers who were out on a hunting expedition. They were about forty Caffirs. They managed to kill three of the Boers, the other four having made their escape. The Caffirs had brought back the clothes, etc., belonging to the dead Boers, and when they came into the town they tore the shirts to pieces tying them round their heads and bodies and danced and screamed for joy in having been able to revenge themselves a little upon the Boers. The Boers had killed several of the Caffirs at their late fight.

We left Coûpon at about eleven and trekked nearly all day, travelling on the edge of the Great Kalahari Desert, but there having been a good deal of rain lately we had sufficient water.

Campbell, who had gone on in front with a Bushman, fell in with an eland bull which he ran down and shot, which was fortunate as we were beginning to feel peckish. This was the first eland that had been shot this season by the whites, and was the first I had tasted. I found the flesh to be most delicious. It tastes neither like buck meat nor beef, but is certainly most delicious. It is a large animal, standing fully as high as a large ox and weighing, I should say, nearly as much. It is fawn coloured, with large straight, though slightly spiralated horns standing back. On a good horse they are easily obtained. The way to get them is this: you get as near as you can, two hundred or three hundred yards, but your horse must do its best. You then turn one out from the troop, for they generally go five or six or more together. When you come up with them you must immediately turn one out, and so manage that he runs in a different direction from the others. When the others are out of sight you may let your horse have a blow by cantering, for at this pace you can keep up with the game. Eland invariably run up wind when pursu d, and when one is turned out the difficulty is to turn it down wind. A cow eland you can drive down wind, but a bull, being more stupid, will

not go there. You are thus as a rule obliged to shoot it on the spot should the waggon be down wind. When separated and driven up wind, eland can be driven as easily as a tame ox. They do not often show fight. Next to the buffalo, eland skin makes the best reims, or in English, straps, for the ox gear. Attempts have been made to tire a troop of eland, but never successfully, for if they keep together they will knock up the best of horses.

We saw a troop of ten or twelve eland grazing half a mile from the road. Chapman and I were determined to get one each, and we each turned one out. In the excitement I forgot the direction of the road. After shooting my eland, a fine cow, I went in search of the road but could not find it. Chapman had parted company with me in the gallop. As the sun was then going down I decided to stay until morning to prevent my getting farther out of my course. I turned in the direction of the dead eland, but did not go close to it as I imagined lions or wolves might be attracted by the smell. I had not my powder-horn with me to make a fire, having taken only my double-barrelled gun in the hurry of leaving the waggon. I was wearing a light pair of trousers and a cotton shirt, without anything above it. I felt exceedingly cold, it being the middle of winter. I knee-haltered my steed so that he might pick up a little grass, and I then fastened him up to a tree near by. It being so cold I had little prospect of being able to sleep. I loosened the horse again, foolishly, intending not to let him go far from me, and watched him for an hour or so. Then I went off to sleep, and must have remained so for half an hour. I awoke with a start, fearing my horse would be off, which turned out only too true. I went a little distance from my saddle and gun in search of him, and then could not find my way back again. I felt rather in a fix—saddle, horse and gun lost. I lay down at another bush and passed the night as well as I could, but I was very cold and uncomfortable. At daybreak I found my saddle and gun, which I strung on my back, and started in quest of the waggon. I had not gone more than half a mile when I came up with my driver on horseback. He had left the waggons in search of me. The waggons had not been more than a mile away. My horse was found two or three miles off.

We arrived at the next watering place and found three or four of Sacomo's people waiting for us to tell us to go to the chief's town. Sacomo is the chief of a pretty large tribe called the Ba Momgwartoo. The other men in our company, knowing what a blackguard Sacomo was, would not listen to his men, though

they said that Sacomo had told them to tell us that we were to turn back if we would not go to headquarters. Next morning, without paying any heed to this message, we trekked nearly all day. After sunrise next morning we came to a small village belonging to Sacomo where we exchanged Caffir corn for eland meat and fat. The people in this village were slaves of Sacomo's tribe and were not permitted to own cattle. The Momgwartoos allowed them to have goats, thus making a distinction between bond and free.

[1] Seghomo, father of Khama.

APPENDIX B

NOTES ON THE CHIEF GALISHWE

Galishwe was captured by Colonel Warren's force a few months after the attack on Cornforth Hill and sentenced to ten years' imprisonment. In 1897 he led another rebellion in the Langeberg. He was captured by Captain Dennison in the Kalahari and sentenced again to ten years' imprisonment. All his lands, now the Pokwani area, were confiscated, surveyed into farms and granted to white settlers. In 1920 he was living in the Magogong Reserve near Taungs. Thompson met him in that year and wrote the following note on the encounter:

'I met him recently, our first meeting since 1878, as he was travelling by train to Kimberley to give evidence before the Native Reserves Commission. He was quite friendly and asked whether my wounds were better. We had a chat about the events of 1878, and he gave me some details of the fight from the natives' side. He put the blame for the attack on Cornforth Hill on his headmen. He declared that it was made against his will but he had to join in. He said also that none of his people would ever have "bitten my hand" had we not helped the Hunters, and entertained and guided Major Brunker's troops.'

Galishwe, Thompson wrote in another note, was the son of Gasibone. In 1858 President Pretorius, first President of the Transvaal, in conjunction with a commando of Free State Boers, had a fight on the present site of Kimberley against Pethlu, the eldest son of Gasibone. The natives on that occasion beat the combined Boer forces and captured some thousands of sheep and cattle. They crossed the Vaal River at Klipdrift, and continued

for about eighty miles to a natural stronghold in Mankorane's territory south of Taungs, where they ensconced themselves. Three weeks alter five hundred Boers attacked this place but they were unable to dislodge the natives. They then engaged the services of a Bushman, who for a few rolls of tobacco shot Gasibone, cut off his head, and sold it to the Boers. They carried it in triumph to Pretoria. In the olden days natives never thought a victory complete until they had secured the head of the opposing chief. Pethlu died a few years later, leaving a son of the same name.

Gasibone was the eldest son of Mothibi, whose second son, by a concubine, was Jantje, the father of Luka Jantje, who was killed by British Colonial troops when fighting with Galishwe in the Langeberg in 1897. Luka Jantje's head was cut off and taken to Capetown by a member of the Colonial forces. Pethlu, second of the name, was one of Galishwe's headmen in the Langeberg rebellion, and it was he who ordered the murder of the Blom family at Pokwani in 1895, in the rebellion arising from the Rinderpest. He was eventually hanged at Kimberley in 1901, on the very spot where his father had defeated the Boers forty-three years before. Truly the Gasibone clan was unlucky in the matter of heads.

APPENDIX C

THE STELLALAND AGREEMENT OF 8 SEPTEMBER, 1884

AGREEMENT

The public of Stellaland having taken notice of the terms proposed by Captain Graham Bower, Deputy Commissioner for Mr. C. J. Rhodes, Commissioner for Bechuanaland with a view of making provisional arrangements for the regulation of affairs and the Government of Stellaland pending Annexation of Stellaland to the Cape Colony hereby empower the Commissioner appointed by the public to accept with the above mentioned C. J. Rhodes the following terms:

Article I

That all transactions entered into between Mr. John MacKenzie with the Volks Committee and the proclamations issued by him be cancelled.

Article II

Pending the Annexation to the Cape Colony Stellaland shall continue its own Government however recognizing Her Majesty's Protectorate, and subject to the conditions that all executive acts must be taken in concert and with the consent of the Commissioner of Bechuanaland.

Article III

That the Land titles issued by the Government of Stellaland be recognized.

Article IV

That in accordance of the proposal offered by Messrs P. J. Joubert superintendent of native affairs and H. Schoeman, member of the Native Location Commission for the S.A. Republic on the one side and C. J. Rhodes, Commissioner for Bechuanaland on the other, the proposal contained in copy of letter A shall be adopted and copy of the letter marked B to the Administration of Stellaland. (Copies of A and B attached.)

Article V

That with the object of Stellaland Government completing its affairs the period of three months shall be reserved before Article II will come into force with the Protectorate and during which time the public shall maintain their rights and have them fulfilled in accordance with Article IV.

We the undersigned Committee, members chosen by the people on the sixth instant hereby declare to have accepted the above terms and conditions on this the eighth day of the month of Sept. 1884.

A. J. E. DE LA REY	Pres.
L. E. L. MUSMAN	Sec.
W. J. PRETORIUS	
P. J. BODENSTEIN	
THEODORE DONES	Members of Committee
A. P. VAN ZYL	
J. S. KOTZE	

I the undersigned, Commissioner of Bechuanaland, hereby declare to have read the above mentioned terms and to accept and ratify them on the eighth day of Sept. 1884.

F. R. THOMPSON	*signed*	C. J. RHODES
Sec. of Commissioner		Commissioner of
of Bechuanaland.		Bechuanaland.

APPENDIX D

EXTRACT FROM C. D. RUDD's DIARY

Following is an extract from C. D. Rudd's diary written at Bulawayo and sent to Mrs. Rudd and Mrs. Thompson at Capetown. The first date is Wednesday, October 31st, 1888:

Wed. 31st noon. Early on Monday afternoon the king sent to us to come up at once. We rode up and found all the Indunas with him, and they had been having a long talk over our affair. After sitting in the kraal for a short time we were told to go with the Indunas outside and we all sat down under a tree for an Indaba. Helm sat in the middle to interpret. First one asked questions and then another. Some of them pretty sensible and some stupid. I forgot to say that first of all Helm went twice carefully through our draft Concession and explained every point to them. I answered the various questions but there was little argument kept up, as they appeared to be asking the questions as a mere matter of form and hardly to wait for an answer, as if their minds were pretty well made up.

After an hour or two of this talk, the four Indunas who were specially told off for the business got up and told Helm to come with them to the king to report all that had passed. We sat and talked to the others as best we could for an hour or more, and then the others came back and said that the king was busy in the buck kraal and they could not see him, and that the Indaba was put off till the morning. My impression that night was that the thing would go through.

We went up at six-thirty the next morning and found all the kraal gates closed up and were told that the king had some special medicine business on. After waiting an hour the four special Indunas came to us and told us to come up and go on with the Indaba. We went round to the back of the kraal when there were soon over one hundred of the headmen. Some of the Indunas had evidently seen the king as they began a lot of new questions and especially as to where we wanted to mine.

We told them we wanted the whole country. They said, 'No, take the part this side of Tati, you have seen that.' I said, 'No, we must have Mashonaland and right up to the Zambesi as well, in fact the whole country.' They said, 'Where is Mashonaland

and where is the Zambesi?' and one of the old chaps pointed south and said, 'The Zambesi must be there.'

They kept on saying that we must take the piece of country next to Tati. I asked them how much the Tati Concession paid them and how much we offered, and how much gold Tati had produced in fifteen years.

They then said they would go again and take our words to the king.

After half an hour they came back and said that the king did not know what we meant by Mashonaland and the Zambesi. When we talked like this we went beyond their power of understanding and confused them. I said, 'Very well, then, it is all over,' and jumped up, and so did Thompson. They said, 'No, sit down again. The king told us that he had not got all our word, but that Thompson had said something in Sechuana which was important but which they were too stupid to understand. Only Lotjie understood and told the king.' (Lotjie is one of the principal advisers of the king who has worked much in our interests.)

They said they must go back again to the king. They had, of course, now shown their hand, so I said, 'No, you shall not go back as you don't understand Sechuana. Let Thompson and Lotjie go to the king alone'—as the king understood Sechuana. To this they agreed and after Thompson and Lotjie had been away fifteen minutes Thompson sent for me to say the king would sign the Concession, and to send it in at once. Of course it was absolutely necessary to have witnesses, and for Maguire and me to be present, so at last we all went in and found the old king on a brandy case in a corner of the buck kraal. He said 'Good morning' very good-temperedly but appeared much hustled and anxious.

To cut a long story short, he absolutely declined to sign for half an hour, saying that a promise was all that he would give but that he never signed his name. I had almost made up my mind to try the clearing-out business again when he suddenly said to Helm, 'Hellum, tele lappi'—Helm, give it me—and there and then he signed it. He would not allow his Indunas to sign it, saying that there was no necessity as they had all discussed it and agreed, and as H. said there was no necessity and that the whole thing had been conducted most constitutionally, we did not press the matter.

I then told the king that I said 'Good-bye' and was off to send the guns. He took my hand, and held it some time and said, 'Are you really off so soon, and when will you come back?' I told him I or my big brother (Rhodes) would be back by March

with the guns. He then asked me how I was going down and a lot of other questions and kept me half an hour while he arranged for one of his boys to go with me the first fifty miles and see I got all I wanted.

APPENDIX E

THE CONCESSION SIGNED BY LOBENGULA

Know all men by these presents that *Whereas* Charles Dunell Rudd of Kimberley, Rochfort Maguire of London and Francis Robert Thompson of Kimberley hereinafter called the grantees have covenanted and agreed and do hereby covenant and agree to pay to me my heirs and successors the sum of One hundred Pounds sterling British Currency on the first day of every lunar month and further to deliver at my Royal Kraal one thousand Martini-Henry Breech-loading Rifles together with one hundred thousand rounds of suitable ball cartridge five hundred of the said Rifles and fifty thousand of the said cartridge to be ordered from England forthwith and delivered with reasonable despatch and the remainder of the said Rifles and Cartridge to be delivered so soon as the said grantees shall have commenced to work Mining Machinery within my territory and further to deliver on the Zambesi river a Steamboat with guns suitable for defensive purposes upon the said river or in lieu of the said Steamboat should I so elect to pay to me the sum of five hundred pounds sterling British Currency upon the execution of these presents I LOBENGULA King of Matabeleland Mashonaland and certain adjoining territories in the exercise of my Sovereign powers and in the presence and with the consent of my Council of Indunas do hereby grant and assign unto the said grantees their heirs representatives and assigns jointly and severally the complete and exclusive charge over all metals and minerals situated and contained in my Kingdom Principalities and dominions together with full power to do all things that they may deem necessary to win and procure the same and to hold collect and enjoy the profits and revenues if any derivable from the said metals and minerals subject to the aforesaid payment. and *WHEREAS* I have been much molested of late by divers persons seeking and desiring to obtain grants and concessions of Land and Mining rights in my

territories I do hereby authorize the said grantees their heirs representatives and assigns to take all necessary and lawful steps to exclude from my Kingdom Principalities and dominions all persons seeking land metals minerals or mining rights therein and I do hereby undertake to render them such needful assistance as they may from time to time require for the exclusion of such persons and to grant no concessions of land or mining rights from and after this date without their consent and concurrence provided that if at any time the said monthly payment of one hundred pounds shall be in arrear for a period of three months then this grant shall cease and determine from the date of the last made payment and further provided that nothing contained in these presents shall extend to or affect a grant made by me of certain mining rights in a portion of my territory south of the Ramakoban river which grant is commonly known as the Tati Concession.

This given under my hand this thirtieth day of October in the year of our Lord Eighteen hundred and Eighty-Eight at my Royal Kraal.

LOBENGULA Mark.

Witnesses:
CHAS. D. HELM
J. J. DREYER

(Signed)
C. D. RUDD
ROCHFORT MAGUIRE
F. R. THOMPSON

I hereby certify that the accompanying document has been fully interpreted and explained by me to the Chief Lobengula and his full Council of Indunas and that all the constitutional usages of the Matabele nation had been complied with prior to his executing same.

Dated at Umguza River this thirtieth day of October 1888.

CHAS. D. HELM

APPENDIX F

EXTRACTS FROM THOMPSON'S DIARY AT BULAWAYO

13rd Sept., 1888. Today a regiment of the Matebili King brought in sixty little children ranging from three years old to five. They have killed a whole location—mothers and fathers, dogs and fowls—and the young children are now considered slaves. I will give you our first meeting with this king as he is called. He lives alone

within a large kraal made of poles. He has eighty young women as his Wives. He goes about naked and is a tremendously big fellow, about as tall as P.J., and not having done a days' work but lie on his back eating meat and drinking beer he is as fat as the fattest woman. On entering the enclosure we had to stop and call out, 'Kumalo'—Great Chief. We were then called in and had to sit on the bare ground, there being no such thing as a chair or stone. He kept us there and then made his appearance. We then had to stand up, take off our hats and were allowed to look at him. He then started to wash himself, we having to wait. After that he turned round and said, 'What do these people want?' We told him that we had come to greet him. Tomorrow we have to go to see him but I am afraid anything we do get in the shape of a Concession will be worthless. However we came to try and we shall do our level best.

28th Sept., 1888. The distance is so tremendous that I cannot form any opinion when we shall get back. We are hard at it hammer and tongs with the king. I shall make no comment as to how far we have succeeded in our mission though I may say that the king has condescended to discuss our proposals with his tribe, which numbers seventy five thousand people. Mr. Shippard the Administrator [of Bechuanaland] is to arrive in about ten days. He has been just two months getting here with waggons.

12th Nov., 1888. Maguire and I walked up to see the king, had a long talk about business with him. Though our position is a very difficult one, I can only compare it with a race, we being the winning horse, and having the lead we have now to try to keep in front. Our 'talks' every day are only to keep our Concession warm, and following out our views in keeping one or two of us up here until such time as miners, etc. etc., can be got up. It would have been madness for us all to have gone back with Rudd. There are dozens of concession seekers at the king's daily and while we are there and before him he cannot give them anything, he having ceded all his minerals to us. 'Nature abhors a vacuum' and there would certainly have been a vacuum if we had all gone down. We hear that a case of witchcraft is being tried. The infortunate being will surely be put to death. Life is of no value here.

A great dance, their annual festivity, is to take place about the end of the year. At this time about one hundred thousand people appear. It is at this dance that all the 'smelling out' takes place and young girls are offered up as sacrifices to be burnt.

I have been up to the king's and borrowed a horse for Maguire.

His horse is lame after the Tati trip. After luncheon we ride over to Hope Fountain for the post. We are anxious for it. We expect news that Rhodes is on his way up here to relieve me, as well as getting news from Rudd.

A letter came by post for the king and I took it up to him. It was from the Chief of Basutoland. I read it to him and he asked me to answer it. He has also asked me to write to the Governor on official business.

I went up to see the king and found him very happy. I sat for a little while. When I got back I found Lotjie, the principal Induna, at the camp. He had come to pay us a visit. Entertained him with sundry cups of coffee. At three o'clock the whole place was astir and great excitement. The king is moving in an hour to one of his other camps. It is the custom that nothing is said by the king on these occasions until the last five minutes. When he says 'inspan' you may conceive the excitement. It is very awkward for us as tomorrow is the day for answering letters so I shall have to sit up all night and write mine, which are very long and difficult to write if I am hurried. The boys are all busy packing our waggons; our camp has to be left too. It is strange to observe the secret manner in which the king moves. I need not go, but with all these white sharks after him I have to sit very close to him. These white men are doing their best to set the king against us, but today the king told me not to heed them and that he believed in me. From a savage I believe it. I think the old boy has taken a liking to me, although (as they say) 'it is I who says it'.

Monday, 24th December. We go to Xmas dinner at the Helms. The choice regiment is dancing before the king today. They had a bull-fight yesterday as they do in Spain; nobody was hurt, though the bull was. There are about a dozen of the royalty outside. Maguire is doing the entertaining while I write. He is using William to interpret.

Tuesday. We went down to see the king this morning and found him in the medicine kraal charming cattle that had been captured. So we could not talk to him. We waited for an hour. A great number of young women were there dancing.

Wednesday. We have just returned from the king. A number of his hunters have gone out for a week's sport among the elephants and elands. I should have liked to have gone. The king offered to arrange for my going but when you nurse a baby I find you must nurse him properly and hold him tight, playing no pranks.

Tuesday, 8th January, 1889. Got up at six o'clock; went to see the king and had a long talk with him. I pointed out that the

Portuguese Consul had proclaimed that Mashonaland was their country, and I advised Lobengula to send some men to claim possession of it. I wrote to Sir Hercules Robinson last post, directed by the king, asking him to ask Her Majesty's Government to interfere and have the Portuguese stopped from their encroachment. I advised Lobengula also that when he sent men to resume possession to allow us to offer him a white man who would go too. He seems favourably inclined to it.

Again the white men have tried to do us harm with the king but the old boy has stuck to us like a brick.

Saturday, 19th January. We have had considerable trouble with the white element this week. Of course, it was what one expected but as monopolists we have to contend against it. They went up to the king in a body and made representations that our notice in *The Argus* was virtually claiming the country and not the gold. This, of course, took with the king. We were sent for and of course denied that we had claimed land. The king was induced to allow these men to write, as they call it, a contradiction to the newspaper, but they have I daresay made all kinds of statements which will appear, though this has not affected our position with the king. He has given us most cordial assurances that he will stick to us, but with documents one never knows where one is in dealing with a despotic and absolutely savage monarch. However, we are hoping that Rhodes will arrive with the necessary payments.

Wednesday. Everything is in the most awful excitement today. It is the commencement of the annual feast, which will last for a month. Hundreds of Kaffirs dressed in their war paint are coming in. The sensation is not very nice, knowing how helpless the few whites are. The dress consists of a head-gear of black ostrich feathers, whiskers of billy-goats tied in bundles at the knees, and all kinds of skins round the waist. With a bundle of assegais and a shield they look the most ferocious brutes. They resemble the Red Indian, and the noises they make are enough to make your blood run cold. All this to an entire stranger looks dreadful but they don't bother the whites, although they say a lot of curious things. One will run out and ask of the king the lives of white men, and so on.

I shall write my letters today so as to be ready in case of a sudden departure by the king. He travels with five of his waggons, a flock of sheep and cattle and a good bodyguard.

Maguire and I, with our boy William File, went up to the Great Place to see the opening of the Great Feast. We found the parade just commencing. There were about two thousand warriors

in their hideous dresses and war paint dancing in a half-circle, a right and left step but retaining the same ground. In the circle were a thousand young girls, dressed in beads and pretty calicoes. Among the women were about fifty queens. The queens carry a long green switch and dance to sounds they call music.

Tuesday. We went up to see the king at about nine o'clock and found the old boy rather seedy; he was bleeding profusely at the nose and suffering from headache. We had breakfast before we started, but on getting there we were invited to have breakfast with him and according to the customs of the land were unable to refuse. Just then Mr. Helm came in. He had arrived at our camp after we left and so followed on, as he also wished to see the king. Our breakfast consisted of about three pounds of stewed beef, the choice part of the ox. The king generally puts away about three pounds at a sitting. We were given our meat on a plate. Maguire, Helm and I sat round in Kaffir style. As Maguire and I had no knives we had each to take a cut and lick our fingers. The only luxury offered was a little salt, but I must say we enjoyed the meat. Natives don't boil meat like Europeans. It is made after the style of beef tea, the only thing added being a little of the gall. After meat came a large pot of Kaffir beer, and fortunately three other white men came in and helped us to finish it. Etiquette demands that nothing should ever be left, so if one happens to be alone and receives a pot of beer it must be finished, if one has to sit all day. We bade the old boy good day and returned.

Sunday, 11th February. We expect Rhodes early next month. I hope, in fact I have made up my mind, to start for home on the fifteenth of March, God willing. I slept the night at the Helms. I found a nice cake made for me and a basin of fresh butter, which I sent to the camp. As usual Mrs. Helm was most kind and hospitable. Mr. and Mrs. Elliott were there. He is the missionary at Inyati, a place I visited about three months ago. They had come to stay at Hope Fountain to be near the place when the big dance is on. The king is supposed to be sent for from this place the day after tomorrow when the dance really commences. The old boy always seems to move during our week for answering letters.

Monday. I am afraid tomorrow will be rather an unsettled day as we shall have to move with the king. I am so sorry, as this place, Invuchu, is a charming spot. We have a lovely camp, and it is at this place that I built a little house. Any amount of beautiful trees, game, fish, streams, in fact a paradise. One not dare take more than a sponge bath as crocodiles abound in all waters over two

feet deep, and to encounter a crocodile is awful. They are about twice as long as a large sofa, and can take an ox under water with the greatest ease. The crocodile is the only meat supposed to be able to poison the king. The liver is the dreaded part, and so any person who kills a crocodile is put to death.

Tuesday. We went up to see the King and tell him of our six waggons approaching, and to ask for leave for them to enter the country. The old boy was very cordial and we went into his private sanctum.

Wednesday. Here we are again at Gubulawayo on the thirteenth. This morning, before one was out of bed queens passed our camp at Invuchu to join the procession that was to escort the king from that place. At about eight o'clock a regiment in war paint passed. We had breakfast about nine and then at a distance saw the regiment falling in and the procession being prepared. We were ready and so had only to give the order to inspan, which was done in quick style. As the procession came up to our camp we moved in the rear. The order of procession was first about thirty queens, all dressed in their best skins, then about fifty young girls each carrying a wand—a stick about seven feet long—and after them the king's two waggons followed by a number of mounted natives. On the right and left of the procession were Matebili soldiers. Then came all the white men's waggons: first Moore, second Usher, third Baker, fourth O'Reilly, fifth ours. It made quite a long train and looked like a day at the races, everybody singing and dancing as they went along.

Thursday. We went up to see the king and there were several regiments dancing. All day regiment after regiment has been coming in. The queens, too, have been mustering, all in their finery. The old boy was very happy. We only had to wish him good day and so did not stay long.

February 17th. Wilson took over the post yesterday. Owing to these great festivities I thought it wise to remain in camp in the event of anything going wrong.

Monday. Mr. Helm, Mr. Carnegie and Mr. Elliott have come in. As we are some distance from the kraal they outspanned at the resident trader's, Dawson, and from there went up to the king's. . . . About eleven o'clock Helm's party came up to the camp and we gave them tea. About twelve Elliott and Helm left, and as they have to come back tomorrow Carnegie decided to stay with us and sleep here. . . . The Rev. Mr. Carnegie is very bellicose, but I agree entirely with him that these Kaffirs will have to be put down with a very strong hand and until that is done things will not go

very satisfactorily. They have never been hammered, the old generation has died out, leaving these young fellows between forty and fifty who have never come in contact with a white army. About four o'clock Carnegie, Maguire and I went up to visit the king.

A rather unpleasant thing happened on the day of the inaugural dance. There were about thirteen white men looking on when a drunken native, who was by no means a nobody, came up and ordered all of us to go. He said that this year they did not want white men to spy and count their numbers. We, having seen what there was to be seen, thought it best to go. With Maguire and myself came Moore, Baker, Bogie and Chadwick. It was obvious to us that to stay and resent an order, although given by an excited and drunkenly infuriated man, would have been foolish. However, men are not always of the same opinion, otherwise, there would never have been silk waistcoats. Eight men thought they would stay, and they had to pay the penalty. The Rev. Mr. Carnegie was one. The native continued to hustle these fellows about, pushing several. Two lost their hats, which were deliberately taken off their heads, and several indignities in the way of choice language were bestowed. We got to our waggons safely without any bother and waited an hour for Carnegie, who turned up at about eight o'clock in the evening. Like the rest he had been pulled about but had managed to get off without losing anything. We asked him how the others had got on. His answer was 'Every man for himself.' He had left the others struggling home to their waggons as best they could.

Tuesday. At nine o'clock the Elliotts arrived with their waggons and outspanned near our camp and Helm joined us at breakfast. At the king's we found that the white men whom Carnegie had left had got home all right with the exception of losing their hats, handkerchiefs and pipes, which the Kaffirs had taken from them. Every allowance must be made for natives at this festive time, and it is only what one experiences in one's own country on fête days. We found the king dressed in grand style—a big Rob Roy sash round his waist, and another yellow and green sash twisted round his neck, crossing his chest and tied under his arms at the back. He wore beautiful skins and his usual crown. Seated in his chair at the entrance to one of his sanctums he received his visitors. His dress looked very well. I don't know whether I have ever described Lobengula in my diary before. Imagine a man about six feet high; in fact imagine Cetawayo with a good, big corporation and you have him exactly, only this man is naked.

Elliott produced a lot of life-sized pictures of different animals

which he had brought to the king as a present. The king told him to put them up on the walls of his house. Lobengula has a very large house built in the European style.

The king turned to Carnegie and said, 'What is this I hear about you white men all being ill-treated yesterday?' Carnegie told him and the king seemed very cut up. He said his heart was sore—no more. Mr. Helm then asked him, if we stayed on, should we be troubled again today. The king said, 'I have nothing more to say at present.' He expressed himself in the native manner of talking, saying that he did not know what was in the heart of the Matebili nation this year. The old hands thought that this was a serious way of expressing himself. On my way back to the camp I met several of the white men who said that they had made up their minds not to go to the Great Dance. . . . After lunch I saddled two horses and went to the Great Dance with William, taking George on a third horse to return with ours. [William and George were native servants.] As we got there the Dance was just about to begin, and now that I have seen it I would not have missed it for a trifle. It was a splendid and novel sight, one that not fifty white men have seen, Everyone was civil. . . . Today everything has passed off well, not an uncivil word from any natives. The drunken man who caused the trouble yesterday is to be killed. It might have been serious because if he had by chance stabbed a white man and the other natives had seen him do it they would have killed us all, as they believe it as well to be hung for a sheep as a lamb. They are like bloodhounds when once they have seen blood, and Lobengula with all his power could not have stopped them.

Maguire and Elliott went up to see the king. It is usual for the king to slaughter about a thousand head of cattle today for the feast but somehow this year has been different from any other, and we suppose it will come off tomorrow. One of the big men, I believe, made a mistake and slaughtered his portion as he thought was usual, but the king ordered all this meat to be put in a heap and the Induna has got into awful trouble. This is, I think, the reason why the killing of the cattle has been delayed. I should not like to be in the Induna's shoes. . . . Maguire turned up about three o'clock. Just after he got in Sekombo, one of the Indunas who was with the king and whom he consulted when giving the Concession, called to ask when the guns and Rhodes were to arrive. We gave him a wad of jam and bread and he left. We were glad to hear from him that he was anxious for Rhodes and the guns to arrive. . . .

Thursday. Today nothing of importance. One thousand head

of cattle were killed at the fest. They are killed in this fashion: about five hundred men stand round and five of the most agile run in among the lot and stab them through the lungs and heart, whereupon they drop and are dead in a few minutes. It is a cruel way but only in accordance with the Matebili's naturally cruel propensities. They will have their beer drinking on Saturday, when they will disperse, and a good thing too. . . .

Friday. Intumbo has been visiting us. During the *tête-à-tête* Intumbo wanted to know if I would give him my daughter for a wife, and asked how it was that the Kaffirs could not get our daughters when white men who came to these parts married Kaffir women. I told him that it was only the scum of the whites who did that. He said, 'Are we only fit for your scum?' He laughed and said it was true. I have been making a feather socket for one of the Indunas—Sekombo.

Sunday. I forgot to mention that on Friday, before leaving the camp I bought a young boy from some of the Matebili. According to the custom here he is now my property. He is a poor little fellow whose mother and father were killed by those awful devils of Matebili, a Mashona by nation. I have bought him for Pat and Cresswell[1] and it was charity to buy him. I gave four tins of powder, two tins of caps, two bars of lead and five yards of calico. The little chap was glad to come to me, where he would be free and have food. If he stayed much longer with the Matebili he would have died of starvation. I shall have him indentured when I get home. I hope he turns out well and is a good boy.[2]

Camp, Wednesday. I got here at two o'clock, found camp at Invuchu. I have been since Friday at Hope Fountain; quite a long time, the first holiday I have had. My time for starting for home is close at hand. I do not think there will be any hitch in getting away. I am most anxious to get to my happy family. . . . Maguire and I went up to see the king. Could not see him, as he was in his private sanctum making medicine for rain.

Thursday. We went up to see the king, just by way of showing ourselves. He was drinking beer. He invited us to join him. One has to drink out of the vessel with him. I found him with three of his queens sitting round him on his waggon. It is a strange fad but the old boy will sleep nowhere but in his waggon.

[1] Thompson's two elder sons.

[2] This boy was brought up by Thompson as a house servant, remaining with the family all his life, and on occasion travelling with them in Europe. He became warmly attached to his master and survived him only a few years. His last request, which was granted, was that he should be buried at his master's feet.

APPENDIX G

LETTERS FROM RUTHERFOORD HARRIS[1]

On 10th July, 1889, Dr. Rutherfoord Harris wrote from Rondebosch, Capetown, to 'My dear Thompson' at Bulawayo:

'I discussed everything very fully with her [Mrs. Thompson]. She tells me she is quite determined you must not leave till Rhodes comes and I have promised to show her all letters and cables received from Rhodes this side, so that she will be able to judge for herself that not a moment of time is being wasted either by Rhodes or self in getting everything ready to start directly Charter is signed, and she is most anxious now that the units are freed that you should see everything up there comes out with flying colours. . . . Your children were looking *exceptionally well and healthy* and not a touch of their having had whooping couch. . . . Your wife was also looking well and had quite a healthy colour in her face. . . . Your wife seemed a little disappointed that I had not referred to you in my letter to the newspapers *re* Matebililand. I *purposely* did not do so, as both Moore and Baker were in the market trying to raise funds and anything I had said would have been put down as partisan and I wished to give my letter the appearance of an outsider's view of matters—in the only place I could I put you down as the head of the trio—Thompson, M. and R. It is, of course, a little matter, but that was my reason. . . . Baker also failed in Capetown owing to my two letters in the *Argus* and he is bust. Moore is here treatening murder and fire against me but he carefully avoids me. Jameson went to the Randt and stopped D. Simmons helping him. I stopped King doing so and Moore is now spending his money in cables to Rhodes saying if you don't give me this and that I shall return and bust you. We keep on wiring Rhodes to send Moore temporizing answers and to hold out vague promises to him *on condition* he waits in Kimberley for Rhodes. I am in daily communication with Jameson and we are working hard by hook and crook to detain Moore in Kimberley without committing ourselves to him.

[1] Neither Rhodes on the one hand, nor Thompson on the other, regarded Dr. Harris's 'working on' of the Matebililand Concession as seriously as he did himself, but he wrote extremely interesting letters.

. . . I am working hard and never lose a chance of helping things on in every way, and in season and out of season I have so preached the Concession up that no other claimant can get anyone to support him. I must say Jameson does you every justice, and on your return you will find a very different estimate placed on what you have done than before I returned. . . . In fact as you are keeping it up there so I am doing the real work and scheming here. Of course I suppose Girdlestone will get the kudos. He does whatever Jameson and I tell him. . . . What a glorious thing the new Charter will be and what a splendid future for us all in ten years if we stick to it and work it on. I am very anxious you should do your best with Rhodes *re* the Secretaryship.[1] Otherwise if I don't get it I shall not bother with the Charter but let him find someone else to work it on. . . .'

On 25th July, 1889, Dr. Harris wrote from Rondebosch that he and his wife had paid a long visit to Mrs. Thompson and found the children looking well. He continued:

'This morning your wife turned up at breakfast time rather anxious about a paragraph in the *Argus* that all the police except six had been killed by Loben. and she thought you might be included. I told her that I did not even finish reading the paragraph as it was too palpably absurd as Loben. was two hundred and fifty miles distant and the police were in Khama's country. . . . I see from letters from Dawson (private) that Cohen is now the *only* one who keeps on frightening the king *re* Original. Moore is at Mafeking and has promised to stay either there or in Kimberley to await Rhodes's arrival. So you will not be bothered with him, and I have wired and wired in all directions and cabled Rhodes twice *re* him and generally left no stone unturned to ensure his absence from Matebililand till Rhodes comes, so that you may work unfettered. . . . and the result that he *will* stay here is mainly owing to myself, cordially backed by Jameson, who does the friendly business while I do the opposite. He explained, as the reason why he would not reply to my £500 challenge *re* Helm that "he had promised Rhodes not to notice newspaper attacks". Is that not delicious! I have taken away every newspaper in the Colony from him. . . . I think you may fairly reckon upon treating and talking to Tainton and Usher as if Moore would either *not* return or would return squared, and that after trying all the markets and *introducing himself* to all leading men here, Kimberley and Johannesburg (such as J.B.R., King, Eckstein, the Taylors,

[1] Of the Chartered Company.

Hanau, etc. etc.) they have one and all refused to listen to him, and now no one paper supports him even to noticing his communications. I told you I would be a match for him, and I think were you down here you would soon see what a revolution I have caused *re* the M.C. Everyone in Rondebosch and neighbourhood knows you are bossing the whole show. I had lunch with the Acting Governor the other day and of course was amongst friends of the M.C. I wired Jameson a piece of news that I have on the highest authority and asked him to send it per special horse to you but he thought it unnecessary as you would soon learn it up there, but I can't help wishing he had done as I wished. The Portuguese Governor of Quilimane cabled the Portuguese Consul, Capetown, that Major Serpia Pinto and three thousand Portuguese soldiers had reached junction of Umfuli and Umnyati. You will see what a serious business this is and that if Loben. does not go for them and kill them, it will establish Portuguese claims to Mashonaland and probably lose Mashonaland for our Charter. Graham Bower earnestly hopes that Loben. will immediately go for them and that you and Moffat will do your utmost to get him to send strong impis against them. And look how this news would induce him to *take* our guns and thus *legally complete* our concession. If Portuguese beat him so much the better, as he will then consent to English troops coming into his country to aid him. Undoubtedly the Boers are acting with the Portuguese both in this and in the seizure of the Delagoa Bay railway. The junction of the Umfuli and Umnyati is pure *Matebele* ground and if Loben. allows them there with an *armed* force how absurd his claims to Mashonaland beyond will look. Our Charter will be null and void, and the English sphere of influence too unless you set Loben, against them. Bower is very feeble and not nearly strong enough to please either you or me. I went into every topic with him, and especially over every point of the importance of making Moffat the *one* man in the country who speaks the Queen's word. He promised to send Home all I said and if he does it must have some effect as I showed him how they had tried to ruin his influence with the king and that he would not be ever properly reinstated unless all communications were made through him and only received through him. He agreed to everything I said and promised to send it all Home. Would you kindly read this to Moffat so that he may know how thoroughly I sympathize with the miserable way he has been treated by our backboneless, one-horse Government. I trust you received the *Weekly Advertiser* I sent per your brother, as I am very anxious your friends, the Helms at least,

will see that *one* of your friends will not stay down here while they were being traduced without going for the traducer. Why did Rudd not do it? . . . I shall start with Rhodes the very first day I can get him to start. All I shall bargain for is that I get the Secretaryship. If he won't give me this I shan't come, but I will do my utmost, all the same, *for your sake*[1] to get him off sharp. I feel pretty certain we can start by August 25th and reach you about September 15th. So it is not very much longer for you to wait. . . . I can get absolutely no news *re* flotation date, and I think we have to thank Moore for it—God damn him. I don't think Rhodes dare float until all is settled satisfactorily *re* the M.C. which you know as well as I that we can not say is as yet. This Portuguese move is also bad. Bower seems to think that the Matebele don't even claim as far as Wahta and the Mazoe, and I do not see how you are going to get the English Government to listen to what Loben. says *are* his boundaries unless he turns Serpia Pinto out. I am writing Moffat *re* the necessity of informing Imperial Government and Bower that without doubt by right of conquest and raiding the Matebele have all ground up to Zambesi and even far on the other side, and that beyond or W. of Tete the Portuguese are only known by antediluvian historic traditions. I am delighted to see from your letter to Jameson that you are keeping up our united lines of friendship all round, and I am sure by this time, as I told them all they would, that they have discovered Moore had purposely surrounded you with lies so as to make them keep away from you and that once they got in touch with you, it would be very different. . . . Rhodes is sure to come and he is bringing back the original from England, where he took it to show it to the Queen, thus *also* showing that we are from England and not from the Cape. . . . I almost foresee that this *sub*-concession dodge of Rhodes and Rudd's may lead to difficulties in the wording of the original as *one* clause, that relating to *sole* concession, is thereby cancelled. However, it is their doing as you can see from Rudd's letters that you showed me and you had better leave it to Rhodes *personally* to work out. It would be impossible for him to give you instructions by writing on such a complicated point. Neither would I care to do so, were I you unless Rhodes is present, for fear of unforeseen troubles arising on which you would have no instructions. . . . Now look up the Mashonaland question and get Moffat to write *strongly* and *distinctly* on behalf of the king again claiming all Mashonaland. Also work up the king to go for

[1] In the letter these words are heavily underlined twice.

Serpia Pinto. The Portuguese scare might make him accept a British Protectorate, and he would accept it if Moffat would promise him military support against the Portuguese violating his kingdom, and as this support is exactly what a Protectorate means Moffat ought plump and plain to promise him this support. Good-bye now, old fellow. . . . With love to you and regards to all present.

'Yours very truly,
'R. HARRIS.'

Dr. Harris wrote from Rondebosch on August 7th, 1889:

'Your wife got very anxious because there were the usual Boer lies in the papers about massacres in Matebeleland, and as she got no letters she came over to us. I told her the reason and to satisfy her mind I wired to Isaacs and Girdlestone and the next day sent their answers to me to her by my groom. The answers were that everything was all right. . . . Your wife called here yesterday and was looking very well, and in driving past your house to see the Middlemisses I saw the children in the garden looking all right. Rhodes has presented his petition to the Queen asking for a Charter for "*The British South African Company*". . . . This petition to the Queen is simply a formal proceeding and really means that all now is settled except the Queen's autograph. This news was cabled on Monday, August 8th, so you may be sure by the time this reaches you that R. has his Charter in his pocket and has sailed. . . . I have not forgotten one point of all our troubles and on my return to Kimberley will again cable Rhodes that production of the original cannot be much longer delayed. Still now that the two Indunas (!) have returned Loben. will be much more decent to you and if you are firm you will have no great trouble in making him await Rhodes' arrival. He will readily now I think believe it is in England and coming out with Rhodes, and it is great proof that we, the M.C., are from the *Queen's* people and so he must wait. Your wife is acting like a brick and urging you to stay till all is *finished* and I feel sure, at whatever sacrifice, you will consistently do this and withhold document *until Rhodes comes*. He will come at once on our Charter being signed and you must blame English red tape for the delay and not us. . . . I note what you say about a big slice. If we do not get the *whole* it will be a blunder pure and simple. Whatever compromising opponents may cost us it must be done and we must not be content with less than the whole because in the *future* what we may now give up with a smile may turn out worth

millions. It will always bring fresh people in and there may be disputes *re* our Charter, etc. etc. I think by playing a *waiting* game we shall starve others out and still get the *whole*, that is provided *you stay*. . . . Get Loben. to start against the Portuguese *very strongly* by letters to Imperial Government and also by impi. If an impi he will certainly take guns without waiting for original and *thus* the Concession will be legally complete. . . . Try still and get Tainton fixed in writing. The best way would be by Dawson hinting that on Rhodes coming perhaps he will not see the force of such high terms being given as he may have Government support which might render Tainton's support unnecessary. Don't think I am forgetting about *Government* but I mean this argument for Tainton's private use *through* Dawson. . . . I shall undoubtedly return on the lines I have told you, and even if not I shall look after your coming away just as carefully.

'With love to you and trusting to hear every mail,

'Ever Yours, R. HARRIS.'

On July 31st, 1889, Dr. Harris wrote:

'I have seen your wife and told her of Rhodes starting August 2nd. . . . I am almost certain to return with Rhodes and then come down with you as Jameson feels sure I shall get Secretaryship as I have done a lot of work down here and am constantly giving my time and brains to help things on. . . . Moore quiet and I think bust . . . you won't have him up your way again. Keep the pot boiling, old man. Stevens ought to be very friendly with the king, but the more I think of him the more disgusted I am at Rhodes's selections. . . . I still feel very strongly that unless Loben. makes a clean sweep of Serpia Pinto and his men the Imperial Government may refuse to recognize Loben.'s claims to Mashonaland as *valid* and half Mashonaland be lost to our Charter. On this point your service to the Charter might be made *invaluable*. . . . Try and deal the Portuguese a heavy countercheck through Loben. moving against them and also through his protesting in writing through Moffat to the Imperial Government—but an impi is the thing if safe. . . . I can't conceive what Rhodes's ideas are *re* flotation but when I see Jameson I shall know more and let you know. I feel that we have yet some months to wait. . . . With love to you old man and regards to all friends.

'Yours very truly,

'R. HARRIS.'

APPENDIX H

LETTER FROM REV. JOHN MOFFAT

Sept. 12th, 1889.

We have had three more Indabas, which may be fun to the Matabele but death to us. I was fortunately able to get a seat in the shade and granted that I will undertake to sit out all their Indabas but most of the fellows had to sit in the sun.

Thompson has been badgered to the utmost limit of endurance. I hope that nearly all the opposition have come to terms or had their teeth drawn . . .

APPENDIX I

LETTER FROM D. DOYLE

Nov., 1889.

. . . He, (Thompson) has been to see the King and say good bye to him this evening His Majesty wishing him a pleasant journey etc. etc. The fact of Thompson having left the country hurridly on a previous occasion has I think in no way damaged us in fact has tended to settle matters more quickly than they otherwise would have been. After old Loogies death the country was in a turmoil—the Natives not knowing what was going to happen next. Thompson leaving the country just at this juncture and the rumour that he was to return with a large impi left the Natives thinking and on our arrival accompanied by Thompson showed them that there was no impi coming and has gone a long way to prove to Lobengula that at present our intentions all friendly etc. . .

APPENDIX J

APPOINTMENT OF F. R. THOMPSON AS BISHOP'S COMMISSARY

We William Thomas by the permission of God Bishop of Mashonaland do hereby nominate and appoint Francis Robert Thompson Esqre M.L.A. of Wynberg in the Cape District to act as our Commissary at all meetings of the Provincial Trusts Board of the Province of South Africa and we do hereby promise to be bound by any action the said Francis Robert Thompson may see fit to take at the meeting of the aforesaid Board.

Witness our hand and seal the 22nd day of June in the year of our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred and Ninety Nine and in the fifth year of our Consecration.

Witness
J. M. Orpen J.P.

Will:
Mashonaland

INDEX

Adams, Major Goold, 18
Alderson, William, 107
Amatebili (Amandabili, Matabele, Matebili), 56, 78
Amnesty (1878), 28

Backhouse, family, 8
Baralong, 37
Barkly, Sir Henry, 14, 15
Barkly West (Klipdrift), 12, 17, 18, 27, 40, 43, 109
Barnato, Barney (Barney Isaacs), 49, 107, 109
Barotse Country, 87
Bechuanaland, 14, 17, 28, 29, 42, 56, 67, 110, 124, 136
Beit, Alfred, 49, 102, 109, 114, 119
Beit, Otto, 115
Bogie, Alexander, 90
Bok, Dr., 33
Bower, Captain Graham, 32, 36, 136, 152, 153
Bruce, Dr. 92
Brunker, Major, 19, 20
Burgers, President, 110

Cape to Cairo, 7, 37, 112
Capetown, Archbishop of (West Jones), 114, 119
Carnarvon, Lord, 15
Carnegie, The Rev., 53, 147
Cetawayo, 18, 147
Chaka, (Zulu king), 56
Chamberlain, Joseph, 101
Chartered Company, British S.A., 48, 101, 120
Coetzee brothers, the 37
Colquhoun (of Rhodesia), 118
Commando Drift (8 September 1884), 32, 37
Compound system, the, 42, 47
Currey, 50

De la Rey, Adriaan, 31
Derby, Lord, 35
de Villiers, Sir Henry, 48
Dingaan, 9
Dinsmuir, 107
Doyle, Dennis, 104, 156

Egypt, 112
Elliot, 53

Francis Town (see Tati)

Galishwe, 135, 136
Gcalecka War, (1878), 18
German S. West-Africa, 110
Gladstone, Mr ((and Africa), 35
Glen Grey Act, the, 121
Goshen Republic, 36–41, 110
Grahamstown, 11
Green, Captain, 28
Grey, Sir George, 12
Grey, Earl, 100
Griqualand East, 15
Griqualand West, 12, 14, 15, 27–28, 30, 40, 42
Grobler, 50, 65, 67, 111
Groot Schuur, 113
Greef, 111

Haggard, Alfred, 73, 75, 77
Hammond, John Hays, 118
Harris, Dr. Rutherfoord, 74, 103, 104, 115, 150–155
Hartz River, 17
Helm, Rev. Charles D., 53, 65, 67, 69, 73, 80, 92, 96, 118, 138, 141, 143, 145, 146, 148, 152
Hepburn, Mr. and Mrs. 50, 65
Hertz, Leopold, 109
Hertzog, General, 124
Hofmeyr, Jan, 34, 115, 123, 124

Imperial League, the, 110
Inyati, 56
Isandhlwana, 19

Jameson, Dr., 74, 75, 83, 98, 99, 103, 113, 115, 121, 123, 150, 151, 155
Jones, Charles T., 33
Joubert, General, 37–39, 110
Juta, Sir Henry, 121

Khama (Bechuana king), 50, 67, 70, 83, 111, 135
Kok, Adam, 14
Korannas, the, 18, 21–23, 111
Kruger, Paul, 32, 34, 57, 99, 110, 113, 114, 123
Kulumani, 57
Kumalo, 54, 56
Kuruman, 18, 47, 57, 129, 132

Langeberg, 19, 20
Lanyon, Sir Owen, 27
Lawley, Sir Arthur, 118
Leary, Glen, 74
Lebombo, 60
Leyds, Dr., 34
Lichtenburg, 37, 39
Lippert, 102
Livingstone, David, 9
Lobengula, 47–55, 57, 60, 65–73, 77, 78, 87–90, 95, 96, 98, 99, 102
Loch, Lord, 111
London Convention 32
London Missionary Society, the, 32
Lotjie, 57, 66, 68, 95–97, 102, 139, 143
Louw, John, 115
Lourenço Marques, 106, 118
Lydenburg goldfields, 14

McCarthy, 19
MacKenzie, Rev. J. M., 32–35, 41, 137
McKenzie, John, 127
McWilliams, 108
Mafeking, 37, 70, 98, 99
Maguire, Rochfort, 7, 49, 53, 68–70 72, 75, 77, 79, 81, 84, 87–90, 139, 141, 142, 144, 148
Malmesbury, 29
Maritz, 9
Maritzburg (see Pietermaritzburg)
Martin, Donald, 25
Mashonaland, 65, 144, 152, 156
Massouw, David, 31
Maund, 81–84
Maxwell, Major, 104
Merriman, John X., 33, 123
Meyer, General Lucas, 110
Milner, Sir Alfred, 123
Missionaries, 51, 53
Moffat, Dr. and Mrs., 9, 57, 130, 152, 156
Molimo, 56
Montsioa (of Mafeking), 37–39
Moore, 82, 103, 150, 151, 153
Moshetti (Baralong chief), 37, 39
Murphy, Dr. William, 109
Mziligazi, 56, 57
Mzilas country, 106

Natal (and Vryheid Republic), 110
'Needy Adventurers,' 53, 54
Nelson's Kop, 128
Newton, Francis, 110

O'Connor, Thomas, 60
Orange Free State, 56, 110
O'Reilly, 111

Parnell, 75, 92, 112,
Phillips, S.A., 107
Pietermaritzburg, 9, 127
Pitsani, Potlogo, 112
Port Elizabeth, 10, 12, 117
Port Natal, 9, 10
Portuguese, 65, 68, 106, 117, 144, 152, 153, 155
Pretoria, 19, 57, 136
Pretorius, President, 135
Pretorius, Swart, Willem, 129

Radziwill, Princess, 119
Rees, Colonel, 29

Rees, 53
Renecke (of Transvaal), 31
Retief, Piet, 9
Rhodes, Cecil John, (two sides to his character), 7; (author first meets), 15; (genius for politics), 16; (in Bechuanaland), 29–41; (Commissioner of Bechuanaland), 34, 38; (on horseback), 35; (and Warren), 41; (amalgamation of diamond mines), 42; (on I.D.B.), 46; (and chartered Co), 48; (and money), 48; (sees off expedition), 50; (concession handed to him), 70; (Rudd, and), 70; (to England to obtain Charter), 71; (his punctuation), 84; (and Baroness Burdett-Coutts), 91; (and Prince of Wales and Queen Victoria), 92; (author on), 105–119; (in Natal cotton), 106; (Kimberley), 107; (Empire builder), 110; (at Oxford), 111; (in Berlin), 112; (Hothouse process), 112, 118; (Health), 113; (and Jameson raid), 112–115; (a religious man), 118, 119; (sobriety), 118;
Rhodes, Frank, 47, 114, 119
Rhodes, Herbert, 105
Rhodes Trust, 119
Rietfontein, 37
Rinderpest Commission, 121
Robinson, Sir Hercules, 33, 34, 36, 37, 51, 73, 98, 99, 110, 144
Rooi Grond, (see Goshen)
Rothschilds, the, 49
Rudd, C. Dunell, 7, 15, 46–55, 67–72, 78–81, 92, 106, 108, 114, 120, (diary) 138–140, 141
Rudd, Frank, 47, 50

Sampson, Byron, 17
Scanlen, Sir Thomas, 33
Schreiner, W. P., 114, 123
Schweizer (of Transvaal), 31
'Scuttle', policy of, 35
Secoconi, 105
Seleries, engagement at, 37
Shepstone, 57
Shippard, Sir Sydney, 67, 99, 110 142
Shoshong, 50, 65, 98
Sievewright, Sir James, 100
Smith, 'Scotty' 29–30
S. A. Federated State (Hofmeyr), 34
S. A. Republic, 33
Southey, Sir Richard, 15
Spalding, Mr. and Mrs. Robert, 25
Sprigg, Sir Gordon, 99, 123
Stellaland, 31, 32, 35, 37, 40

Tainton, 151, 155
Tarry and Co, 107
Tati, 53, 57, 73, 74, 84, 99, 139
Tati, River, 56
Taungs, Reserve, 30, 135
Thompson, Francis (author's father(, 8, 127–135
Thompson, Senator Francis Charles (author's son), 17
Thompson, Colonel Robert, 8
Thompson, Francis Robert (Matebili), (his family), 8; (his mother), 8, 9, 27; (first earning), 12; (Oxford), 12, 13, 120; (death of father), 27; (Chief Inspector native reserves), 28; (at Malmesbury, 1881, and marriage), 29; (secretary and guide Rhodes in Bechuanaland); 33, (De Beers), 42–46; (Protector of Natives, 1888), 48; (syndicate formed), 49; (arrival Lobengula), 54; (concession granted), 69; (politics and parliament), 121; (farming), 123;

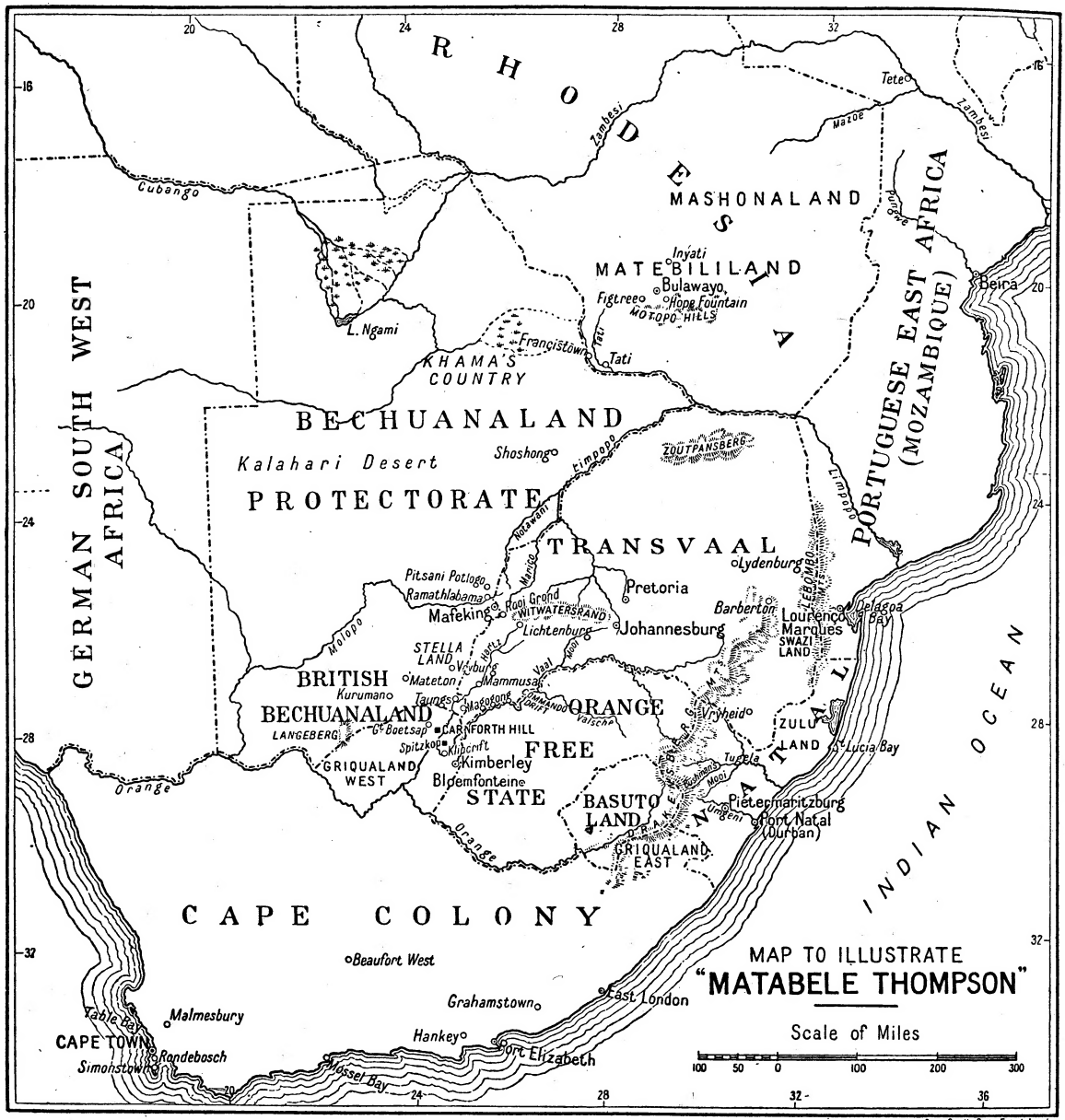
Umguza, River, 98
Upington, Sir Thomas, 48
Usher, 151

Vaal, River, 13, 136
Valsche ('False') River, 128
Van Niekerk, (of Stellaland), 31, 32, 40

Van Pittius, Nicholas Gey, 37, 40
Voortrekkers, 9
Vryburg, 31, 32, 37, 40, 70
Vryheid, Republic, 34, 110

Wallace, Major, 107
Warren, Sir Charles, 28, 31, 40, 41, 111, 135
Watson, J. R. M., 128
Weenen (massacre of), 9
Wiener, Ludwig, 33
Wilson, Ben (Matebili), 90
Witwatersrand, 47
Wynberg, 121

Zambesi, River, 9, 48, 59, 66, 87, 139, 153
Zoutpansberg, 14, 47
Zululand, 34
Zulus, 56–58, 105
Zulu War (1879), 18, 65
Zwangendaba (battle of 1878), 57



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